

THE
FOOL OF QUALITY;

OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
HENRY EARL OF MORELAND.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY MR BROOKE.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR EDWARD JOHNSTON.
1792.



THE
FOOL OF QUALITY;
OR, THE
HISTORY
OR
HENRY EARL OF MORELAND.

C H A P. XIV.

HERE the Countess, for the first time, broke in upon her cousin's narration. Happy Matilda, she cried, how distinguished was thy destiny; were it but for a year, were it but for a day, for that day thou didst yet enjoy the consummation of all thy wishes, a lot rarely allowed to any daughter of Adam! I was not then born to envy her state. Sweet girl! she deserved you; she was after my own heart; the excess of her passion for you made her truly worthy of you. But

4 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

tell me, my cousin, how could you be so long ignorant of the dear girl's affection for you? The language of love is so very intelligible, so expressive through every motion and every organ, as must, with sufficient clearness, have opened your eyes to the object. Indeed, Madam, replied Mr Clinton, she herself led me away from any such apprehensions, by drawing so many pictures of the man whom she said she loved, all copied from the creature of her own brain, and covered and disguised with such imaginary excellencies, as must have prevented myself, as well as every one living, from perceiving therein the smallest trace of my own resemblance. Do not tell me, cried Lady Maitland, she was a true and a sweet painter; and I would have known you by her portrait in the midst of a million. But proceed, I beseech you; my whole soul is in your story.

Within a few months after my marriage, continued Mr Clinton, you, my cousin, first opened your fair eyes to the light, and my Matty and I had the honour of being your sponsors.

Within the first year of my marriage, my girl, also, brought a son into the world, and within the two years following was delivered of a daughter.



The joy of the grandfather, on those events, was indescribable. Alas, good man! he thought that he perceived, in their infant aspects, a thousand happy promises and opening prospects. He saw himself, as it were, perpetuated in a descending and widening progeny, who, like their native Thames, should roll down in a tide of expanding wealth and prosperity. He wanted that all the world should participate of his happiness, and our house once more became the house of festivity.

A number of external successes, also, assisted to persuade us in those days, that felicity was to be attained and ascertained upon earth. The regency of Cromwell was administered with the strictest justice at home, while, at the same time, it became revered and formidable abroad, and extended its influence to regions the most remote. Under the protection of the British flag, we sent our ships out to the East, and to the West, and wealth came pouring in upon us from all quarters of the globe.

In the mean while, my wife and I lived together in perfect harmony. Though my commerce and acquaintance was greatly extended, I had yet formed no friendships from home, that partook of

6 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

heart-felt tenderness, except for your mamma. All my pleasures and desires, all my world was, in a manner, confined and absorbed within the compass of my own walls. In the good old man and his daughter, and in the pledges of their endearing attachment to me, every wish that my soul could form was centered. Mutual joy sat round our board, mutual peace prepared our pillows: and, during a swimming period of six years, I scarce remember to have experienced the smallest discontent, save what arose from the inordinacy of my wife's affection for me.

While she continued to bless my arms, I thought that no one had ever loved with greater warmth than I loved her; and yet, at times, I remarked a very striking difference between the manner and effects of our feelings for each other. If business detained me an hour extraordinary abroad, the panting of her bosom, that eagerness of look with which she received me, was to me a painful evidence of her anxiety during my absence. One evening I found her in fainting fits, merely because she was told that a duel had just happened between Lord Mohun and a person who had much the resemblance of her Clinton. In short, if my head or my finger ached, I found myself under the

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 9

necessity of concealing my ailment, and of assuming a cheerfulness disagreeable to the occasion, to prevent the worse consequences of her ready alarms. On the other hand, my affection was tranquil and serene; it was tender and fervent, indeed, but without tumult or disturbance; a species of love which I afterwards found to be by far the most eligible; for every kind of passion is unquestionably a kind of suffering: love in God, therefore, must be wholly an action; it acts infinitely upon others without any possibility of being acted upon.

Thus the years of my life moved onward upon down, when the small-pox, that capital enemy to youth and beauty, became epidemical in the city. Our children caught the contagion. All possible care was taken, and all possible art employed. A number of physicians was kept constantly about them. Fifteen days of their illness were already elapsed, and the doctors pronounced them out of danger; when the distemper took a sudden and malignant turn, and, in one and the same minute, both my babes expired in the arms of their mother.

I was in the room at the time; and as I knew the extreme tenderness of my Matty's nature, all my concern, as well

8 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

as attention was turned upon her. I took her fondly by the hand, and, looking up to her face, I was instantly alarmed and shocked by that placid serenity which appeared in her countenance, and which I expected to be quickly changed into some frantic eruption. But, first dropping a smiling tear on her infants, and then lifting her glistening eyes to heaven ! I thank thee, I thank thee, O my Maker ! she cried, thou hast made me of some use ; I have not been born in vain ; thou hast ordained me the humble vehicle of two safe and certain angels, living attendants of thy throne, and sweet singers of thy praises in the kingdom of little children, for ever and for ever. I have yet sufficient left, more blessings remaining than suit the lot of mortality ! take me from them I beseech thee, whenever it is thy good pleasure ; for I fear there are some of them, which I could not, I could not bear to have taken away from me ! So prayed the dear saint ; and looking eagerly at me, No, my Harry she cried out, I fear, I fear I could not bear it ! So saying, she suddenly cast herself into my bosom, and grasping at my neck, and gushing into a flood of anguish, we mingled our sobs and our tears together, till no more were left to be shed.

You are affected my dearest cousin—I had better stop here. If you are moved by small matters, how would your heart be wrung by some ensuing distresses!—I must not venture to proceed.

Go on, cried the Countess, go on, I insist upon it! I love to weep, I joy to grieve; it is my happiness, my delight, to have my heart broken in pieces.

We were both of us much relieved by the vent of our mutual passion; for, though my wife still continued to keep to me and cling about me, she yet seemed to be sweetly composed, and sunk within my arms, as into a bed and depth of peace.

At length I listened to a kind of murmur and bustle in the hall, and I heard some one distinctly cry, O my master, my master!

We started up at the instant. Mr Golding had been from home at the time of the deadly crisis of my two darling little ones; and had quieted all his fears and renewed all his prospects, in the view and full assurance of their life and quick recovery. We had been too much engaged and occupied in our own personal griefs, to give to our servants the seasonable precaution of breaking the matter to our father by unalarming degrees; and a rude

fellow, at his entrance, bluntly told him that the children were both dead; whereupon he clapped his hands together, and, casting himself into a chair, remained without sense or motion.

When we ran out, we were greatly terrified by the manner of his aspect: though his eyes were closed, his brows were gloomy and contracted, while the nether part of his face looked quiet and composed.

I instantly sent for a surgeon, and recalled the physicians who had but lately left us; while my Matty stood motionless, with her hands closed together, and her eyes fixed upon her father. At length she cried out, My papa, my papa, my dear papa, I would, I would I had died before I came to this hour! But blessed be thy will, since it is thy will, O God! When all other props are sapped and plucked from under me, I trust to fall into thee, my Father which art in heaven!

Being put to bed, and bled, he recovered motion and speech, and we got him to swallow a composing draught, though he did not yet recollect any person or thing about him.

Notwithstanding our late fatigues, Matty and I sat up with him most of the night; and then ordering a pallet to be brought

into the room, we lay down to take a little rest toward morning. Alas, said I to myself, how rich was I yesterday, and how is my world abridged! These narrow walls now contain all that is left me of all the possessions that I value upon earth.

Poor Mr Golding was but ill qualified to bear calamity. His life had been a life of sound health and successes; and he never had been acquainted with sickness, or with affliction, save on the death of his wife, whom he had married for money, and on the illness of his daughter as already related.

As he had taken an opiate, he did not awaken till it was late in the day. Turning his head toward me, Is it you, Harry, says he? How do you find yourself, Sir, said I?—Why, has any thing been the matter with me? Indeed I do not feel myself right; but send my children to me; send my Jacky and my little Harriet; the sight of them will be a restorative beyond all the cordials in the world.—You are silent, Harry—What is the meaning?—O, now I begin to remember—my sweet babies, my little play-fellows, I shall never see you any more.

Here he burst into the most violent gust of passion. He groaned, he wept, he cried aloud with heart-piercing excla-

mations ; while I caught up Matty in my arms, and, running with her to a distant apartment, caught a kiss, and locked her in.

I returned, but found him in the same violence of agitation. I spoke to him, I would have comforted him ; but he cried, Be quiet, Harry, I will not be comforted. I will go to my children ; they shall not be torn from me ; we will die, we will be buried, we will lie in the same grave together.

As I found myself sick, and ready to faint under the oppression of his lamentations, I withdrew to the next chamber, and there plentifully vented the contagious shower.

After some time I listened, and perceived that all was quiet ; and returning, I found him in a kind of troubled doze, from whence he fell into a deep and peaceful sleep. Thus, he continued for three days, wailing and slumbering by fits, without tasting any matter of nourishment, though his daughter and I implored him on our knees, and with tears. No reasonings, no intreaties could avail for appeasing him ; it was from the association of our sorrows alone that he appeared to admit of any consolation.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY

At length his passion subsided into a sullen and silent calm; he would speak to nobody, he would answer none of us except by monosyllables.

Within a few following weeks, news was brought me that our ship the Phoenix was arrived in the Downs, safe and richly laden from the East Indies.

Immediately I carried the tidings to the old man, in the pleasing expectation that they would serve to divert, or, at least, to amuse his melancholy. But, fixing his look upon me, Wherefore, Harry, dost thou tell me of ships and Indies? he cried; both Indies are poor to me, they have nothing that they can send me. I have no road to go upon earth, no way upon sea to navigate; I am already become a wild and wasted Babylon, wherein the voice of music shall never more be heard. O ye old and unblest knees, where are now your precious babes, who were wont to play about ye, and to cling and climb upon ye? gone, gone, gone, gone, never, never to return!

Here, breaking into tears, I cried, We are both young yet, my father, we may yet have many children to be the comfort of your age. No, my Harry, no, he replied; you may, indeed, have many chil-

dren, but you will never have any children like my darling children.

Mr Golding, from this time, no more entered his counting-house, nor paid or received visits, nor kept up any correspondence. Even my company and that of his daughter appeared to oppress him; and he rarely left his apartment, where an old folio bible was his only companion.

Hereupon I began to withdraw our effects from trade, and having called in the best part of them, I lodged near half a million in the Dutch funds. When I went to advise with my father on the occasion, What, my child, said he, what have I to say to the world, or to the things of the world? Do just as you please with the one, and with the other; and never consult a person on any affair wherein the party consulted has no interest or concern.

One morning, as I lay in bed, Matty, threw her arms about me, and hiding her blushing face in my bosom, My Harry, says she, if you could handsomely bring it about to my poor papa, perhaps it would be some matter of consolation to him to know that I am with child.

When I broke the matter to him, he did not, at first, appear to be sensibly affected; in time, however, the weight of his affliction seemed considerably light-

ened, and, as my wife advanced in her pregnancy, he began to look us in the face, he sat with us at one table, and became conversable as formerly.

One day I went to dine with Mr Settle, a hardware merchant, who had appointed to pay me a large sum of money. On my return in the evening, thro' Moorfields, attended only by my favourite Irishman, a very faithful and active fellow, though it was yet fair day, I was suddenly set upon by a posse of robbers, who rushed on me from behind a cover. The first of them, running up, fired directly in my face, but did me no farther damage than by carrying away a small piece of the upper part of my left ear. Had the fools demanded my money, I would have given it to them at a word; but finding them bent on murder, I resolved that they should have my life at as dear a rate as possible. I instantly drew my sword, and ran the first through the body; and then, rushing on the second assailant, I laid him also on the ground, before he had time to take his aim, so that his pistol went harmlessly off in his fall.

In the mean while, my brave and loving companion was not idle; with two strokes of his oaken cudgel he had levelled two more of them with the earth. Here-

upon the remainder halted, retreated into a group, and then stood and fired upon us altogether; but observing that we did not drop, they cast their arms to the ground, and ran off several ways as fast as they could. My good friend, Tirlah O'Donnoh, then turned affectionately to me. Are you hurt, my dear master, says he? I believe I am, Tirlah; let us make home the best we can. O, cried the noble creature, if no body was hurt but Tirlah, Tirlah wouldn't be hurt at all.

Here, taking me under the arm, we walked slowly to the city, till coming to a hackney coach, he put me, tenderly, into it, and sitting beside me, supported me, as I began to grow weak through much effusion of blood.

As soon as we got home, the coachman, as is their practice, thundered at the door, and my Matty, according to custom whenever I was abroad, was the readiest of all our domestics to open.

By this time I had fainted, and was quite insensible; but when my tender and true mate saw me borne by two men into her presence, all pale and bloody, she, who thought she had fortitude to support the wreck of the world, gave a shriek that was enough to alarm the neighbourhood, and instantly falling backward, got

a violent contusion in the hinder part of her head.

Immediately we were conveyed to separate beds, and all requisite help was provided. It was found that I had received six or seven flesh-wounds, but none of them proved dangerous, as they were given at a distance, and by pistol-shot. But, alas! my Matty's case was very different; she fell into sudden and premature labour, and having suffered extreme anguish all the night, during which she ceased not to inquire after me, she was with difficulty delivered of a male infant, who was suffocated in the birth.

In the mean while, the good and tender-hearted old gentleman hurried about, incessantly, from one of us to the other, wringing his hands, and scarcely retaining his senses.

As soon as my wounds were dressed, and I had recovered my memory, I looked about, and hastily inquired for my wife; but they cautiously answered me, that she was something indisposed with the fright which she got at seeing me bloody, and that her father had insisted on her going to bed.

On the second dressing of my wounds, I was pronounced out of danger, and then they ventured to tell me of my Matty's

miscarriage, and of the bruise which she had got in her fall when she fainted. On hearing this my heart was cleft, as it were, in twain; I accused myself of the murder of my wife and infant; and I accused all, without exception, of their indiscretion in not concealing my disaster from her.

At times I began to fear that my wife was either dead, or much worse than they represented. On my third dressing, therefore, I peremptorily insisted on my being carried to her chamber. I sent her notice of my visit, and, on entering the room, He lives then, she cried, my husband, my Harry lives! it is enough; I shall die happy, I shall now depart in peace.

Here I ordered myself to be laid by her side, when taking a hand, which she had feebly reached out, and pressing it to my lips, You would forsake me then, my Matty? you die, you say; and you die happy, in leaving me the most wretched, the most desolate of men. You die, my love, you die; and I, who would have fostered you and your babe with my vitals, it is I who have dug a grave for the one and for the other. But you must not forsake me, my Matty; I will not be forsaken by you; since we cannot live asunder, let us die, let us die together!

Here a passionate silence ensued on either part. But my wounds growing painful, and beginning to bleed afresh, I was obliged to be carried back to my own apartment.

Within a few days more, I was so well recovered as to be able to walk about; from which time I was a constant attendant on my beloved, and became her most tender and assiduous nurse-keeper.

You must have heard, my cousin, that the customs and manners of those times were altogether the reverse of what they are at present. Hypocrisy is no longer a fault among men; all now is avowed libertinism and open profaneness; and children scoff at the name and profession of that religion which their fathers revered. On the contrary, in those days, all men were either real or pretended zealots; every mechanic professed, like Aaron, to carry a Urim and Thummim about him; and no man would engage in any business or bargain, tho' with an intent to overreach his neighbour, without going apart, as he said, to consult the Lord.

My Matty, at the same time, was the holiest of all saints, without any parade of sanctification. Her's was a religion, of whose value she had the daily and hourly experience; it was indeed a religion of

power. It held her, as on a rock, in the midst of a turbulent and fluctuating world : it gave her a peace of spirit that smiled at provocation : it gave her comfort in affliction, patience in anguish, exaltation in humiliation, and triumph in death.

In about five weeks after her unhappy miscarriage, she appeared on the recovery, though by very slow degrees, and with assistance, at times, sat up in her bed ; when her oldest physician, one morning, called me apart, I am loth, Sir, said he, very loth to acquaint you with my apprehensions. I wish I may be mistaken ; but I fear greatly for you, I fear that your dear lady cannot recover. By the symptoms, I conjecture that an abscess, or imposthume, is forming within her ; but a few days will ascertain matters either for us or against us.

Had all sorts of evil tidings come crowding one upon another, I should not have been affected as I then was affected. I could not rise from my seat to bid the doctor adieu. My knees trembled under me ; a swimming came before my eyes ; and a sudden sickness relaxed and reversed my whole frame. Alas, I had not, at that time, the resource of my Matty ; I had not on the armour with which she was armed to all issues and events. I, how-

ever, raised my thoughts to Heaven, in a kind of helpless acquiescence rather than confident resignation. I struggled, not to appear weaker than became my manhood, and I said to myself, Doctors have often been mistaken.

Having recollected my strength and spirits the best I could, I ventured to enter my wife's apartment. She was just raised in her bed, from whence her pale and emaciated countenance looked forth, as the sun, towards his setting, looks through a sickly atmosphere, in confidence of his arising in the fulness of morning glory.

Having cautiously and dejectedly seated myself beside her, she reached out both her hands, and pressing one of mine between them, I love you no longer, my Harry, she cried; I love you no longer. Your rival, at length, has conquered, I am the bride of another. And yet I love you in a measure, since in you I love all that is him, or that is his, and that I think is much, a great deal, indeed, of all that is lovely. O, my dear, my sweet, mine only enemy, as I may say! Riches were nothing unto me, pleasures were nothing unto me, the world was nothing unto me! You, and you only, Harry, stood between me and my heaven, between me and my God. Long, and often, and vainly have

22 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

I strove and struggled against you, but my Bridegroom at length is become jealous of you; my true Owner calls me from you, and takes me all to himself! Be not alarmed then, my Harry, when I tell you that I must leave you. You will grieve for me, you will grieve greatly for me, my beloved, but give way to the kindly shower that your Lord shed for his Lazarus, and let the tears of humanity alleviate and lighten the weight of your affliction.—Ah, my Harry, I tremble for you; what a course you have to run!—what perils, what temptations!—Deliver him from them, my Master, deliver him from them all!—Again what blissful prospects— they are gone, they are vanished!—I sink, I die under the weight and length of succeeding misery!—Again it opens; all is cleared; and his end, like that of Job, is more blessed than his beginning.—Ah, my Harry, my Harry, your heart must be wrung by many engines; it shall be tried in many fires; but I trust it is a golden heart, and will come forth with all its weight!

You have been dreaming, my love, I said, you have been dreaming; and the impression still lies heavy and melancholy on your memory.

Yes, she replied, I have been dreaming

indeed ; but then my dreams are much more real than my waking visions. When all things sensible are shut out, it is then that the spirit enlarges, grows conscious of its own activity, its own power and presence, and sees by a light whose evidence is beyond that of the sun.

O, my angel, I cried, should any thing happen to you——But I dare not look that way ; for I know, I find, I feel that I could not survive you !

You must survive me, my Harry ! nay, you will once more be married. I beheld your bride last night. Even now she stands before me, the sister of my spirit, and one of the loveliest compositions of sin and death that ever was framed for dissolution. Her also you will lose, and you will think, nay, you will assure yourself, that no powers in heaven or earth can avail for a ray of comfort. In this life, however, you will finally, unexpectedly, and most wonderfully be blessed ; and soon after, we shall all meet, and be more intimately, and more endearingly wedded than ever, where yet there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

While she yet spoke, her pains, as the pains of labour, again came upon her, and went off, and again returned, after intermitting swoonings.

O, my cousin, what a solemn, what a fearful thing is death! all our inlets of knowledge and sensation closed at once! the sound of cheer and the voice of friendship, and the comfort of light, shut out from us for ever! Nothing before us, but a blackness and depth of oblivion; or, beyond it, a doubtful and alarming sensibility! Strange scenes, and strange worlds, strange associates, and strange perceptions, perhaps of horrid realities, infinitely worse than non-entity! Such are the brightest prospects of infidelity in death!

Where, at that time, are your scoffers, your desires of futurity? where your merry companions, who turn their own eternity into matter of laugh and ridicule? Dejected and aghast, their countenance wholly fallen, and their heart sunk, within them, they all tremble and wish to believe, in this the hour of dissolution. They feel their existence sapped and sinking from under them; and nature compels them in the drowning of their souls, to cry out, to something, to any thing, Save, save, or I perish!

Far different was the state of my little and lowly Matty, my saint of saints, at that tremendous period! where all others would have sunk, there she soared aloft; and she dropped the world and its wealth,

with her body and all the sensible affections thereof, with the same satisfaction that a poor man, just come to a great estate, would drop his tattered garb to put on gorgeous apparel.

O, my beloved ! she would cry in the midst of her pains, I have been weakly through life, I have been weakness itself, and therefore not able to take up thy cross ; but be thou strong in my weakness, shew thy mightiness in me, and then lay it upon me with all its weight !

Again, after a swoon, and when her pangs became excessive, I refuse not thy process, my Master, she cried ! Thy cross and thorny crown, they are all my ambition ! Point thy thorns, twist them harder, let them pierce into my soul ; so thou suffer me not to fail or fall from thee, I care not !

Think, my cousin, what I endured upon that occasion ; my rending heart shared her sufferings, and felt pang for pang. Nay, I was not far from murmuring and questioning with my God, on his putting to such tortures the most guiltless of his creatures. If the lambs of thy flock, I secretly said, If thy lambs are appointed to such excruciating sensations, what must be the portion of such sinners as I am ?

THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

When she drew near the goal of her blessed course upon earth, O my Almighty Sampson! she faintly cried, thou shakest the two pillars of my frail and sinful fabric; finish then thy conquest in me; down, down with the whole building appointed to ruin! Let no one, O Lord, of mine enemies or of thine enemies escape thy victorious arm! but slay all those by my death, with whom I have been vainly combating during my life-time! So saying, her pains in an instant forsook her. The form of her countenance was suddenly changed from the expression of agony into that of ecstasy. She raised her hands on high, and exerting herself to follow them, she cried, I come, I come! then sighed and dropped over.—The muscles of her face still retained the stamp of the last sentiment of her soul; and while the body hastened to be mingled with earth, it seemed to partake of that heaven to which its spirit had been exalted.

You may think it odd, dearest Madam, that, for some time past, I have taken no note of the man to whom I was tied by every possible bond of duty, gratitude, and affection. The fact is, that, during the latter part of my wife's illness, and for some weeks after her death, Mr Golding

was confined to his chamber by a severe fit of the gout; and the acuteness of his pains scarce permitted him to attend to any other concern. While my Matty lived, therefore, I divided my time and assiduities as equally as I could between the daughter and father; and, at any intervals of ease, I used to read to him his favourite passages in the Bible.

As soon as my faint had expired, I charged the servants not to give any intimation of her death to their master; but alas! our silence and our looks were too sure indicators of the fatal tidings; for, from the highest to the least, my Matty had been the idol of the whole house, and her death appeared to them as the loss of every earthly possession.

Having looked, several times, intently and inquisitively in my face, Well, Harry, says Mr Golding, all is over then, I see; we must go to her, but my child shall no more return to us.—You are silent, my Harry.—O thou fell glutton, Death! I had but one morsel left for the whole of my sustenance, and that too thou hast devoured. Here he gave a deep groan, and sunk into a state of insensibility, from which, however, he was soon recovered by the return of an anguishing fit of the gout.

When I look back; my fair cousin, on the passages of my life; it is a matter of amazement to me, that a creature so frail, so feebly, and so delicately constituted as man, with nerves so apt to be racked, and a heart to be wrung with anguish, can possibly endure under the weights of calamity, that at times are laid upon him.

I had not yet dropped a tear. I was in a state of half stupid and half-flightly insensibility; as one who, having lost every thing, had nothing further to look for, and therefore nothing to regard. But when I saw my dear old man, my best friend, my father, whelmed under such a depth of affliction, all the sluices of my soul and inmost affections were laid open, and I broke into an avowed passion of tears and exclamations, till, like David, in his strife of love with Jonathan, I exceeded. I accused myself of all the evils that had happened to his house; and I devoted the day to darkness, and the night to desolation, wherein, by my presence and connections, I had brought those mischiefs upon him. The good man was greatly struck, and I think partly consoled by the excess of my sorrows; and, all desolate as he was, he attempted to administer that comfort to me which he

himself wanted more than any who had life.

Break not your heart, my Harry, break not your heart, my child ! he cried ; deprive me not of the only consolation that is left me ! you are now my only trust, my only stay upon earth. A wretched merchant I am, whose whole wealth is cast away, save thee, thou precious casket, thou only remnant of all my possessions ! My girl, indeed, was thy true lover, the tenderest of all mates ; her love to thee, my son, was passing the love of women ; but we have lost her, we have lost her, and wailing is all the portion that is left us below.

As soon as the family heard the voice of our mourning, they too gave a loose to the impatience of their griefs, and all the house was filled with the sound of lamentation.

On the following day I summoned the chief medical artists, and got the precious remains of my angel embalmed. She was laid under a sumptuous canopy, with a silver coffin at her bed's foot, and, every night when the house was at rest, I stole secretly from my bed and stretched myself beside her. I pressed her cold lips to mine ; I clasped her corpse to my warm bosom, as though I expected to restore it

to life by transfusing my soul into it. I spoke to her as when living; I reminded her of the several tender and endearing passages of our loves; and I reminded her also of the loss of our little ones, by whom we became essentially one, inseparably united in soul and body for ever.

There is surely, my cousin, a species of pleasure in grief, a kind of soothing and deep delight that arises with the tears which are pushed from the fountain of God in the soul, from the charities and sensibilities of the human heart divine.

True, true, my precious cousin, replied the Countess, giving a fresh loose to her tears—O, Matilda, I would I were with thee!—true, my cousin, I say; even now I sink, I die, under the pleasure of your narration.

Upon the ninth night, continued Mr Clinton, as I lay by the side of all that remained of my Matty, overtoiled and overwatched, I fell into a deep sleep. My mind, notwithstanding, at the time seemed more awake and more alive to objects than ever. In an instant she stood visible and confessed before me; I saw her clearer than at noon-day, by the light which she cast with profusion abroad. Every feature and former trace seemed heightened into a lustre, without a loss of the least simi-

itude. She smiled ineffable sweetness and blessedness upon me : and stooping down, felt her embrace about my heart and about my spirit ; while, at the same time, saw her bent in complacence before me. For a length of ecstatic pleasure, which I from her communion and infusion into my soul, My Harry, says she, grieve not for me ! all the delights that your world could sum up in an age, would not amount to my blebs, no not for an hour ; it is a weight of enjoyment that in an instant would crush to nothing the whole frame of your mortality. Grieve not then for me, my Harry, but resign my beggarly spoils to their beggarly parent ; ashes to ashes, and dust to dust ! In my inordinate fondness for you, I have at length obtained a promise, that my Master and your Master, my Beloved and your Lover, shall finally bear you triumphant through all the enemies that are set in fearful array against you. Having so said, I felt myself as it were composed within an engine of love ; and again losing the remembrance of all that had passed, I sunk, as into a state of utter oblivion.

Toward the dawning, I was awakened by the clapping of hands and the cries of lamentation. Starting up, I perceived Mr Golding at the bedside, suspended

over his Matty and me, and pouring forth his complaints.

There was a favoured domestic of his, a little old man, who had always kept a careful and inquisitive eye over every thing that was in or concerned our household. This Argus, it seems, at length suspected my nightly visits to the dead, and, lurking in a corner, saw me open and enter the chamber where the corpse was deposited. As he lay in his master's apartment, he took the first opportunity of his being awake to impart what he thought a matter of extraordinary intelligence to him. Sir, says he, if I am not greatly deceived, my young master is this moment in bed with his dead lady. What is this you tell me? cried Mr Golding. No, John, no, what you say is impossible. All who live, love that which is living alone; whatever favours of death, is detestable to all men. As I am here, replied John, I am almost assured that what I tell you is a fact. Peace, peace, you old fool, said Mr Golding; think you that our Harry is more loving than father Abraham, and yet Abraham desired to bury his dead out of his sight. I know not how that may be, said trusty John, but, if you are able to stir, I will help you to go and see. I am sure the thought of it melts the very heart within me.

Accordingly Mr Golding, like old Jacob, strengthened himself and arose, and, pained as he was, he came, with the help of his John, to the place where I lay.

Having for some time looked upon me, as I slept with his Matty fast folded in my arms; he could no longer contain his emotions, but he and John broke forth into tears and exclamations. O my children, my children, my dearest children, he cried, why did you exalt me to such a pitch of blessedness? was it only to cast me down into the deeper gulph of misery, a gulph that has neither bank nor bottom?

As I arose, all ashamed to be detected in that manner, the good man caught me in his arms. My Harry, my Harry, says he, what shall I pay you, my son, for your superabundant love to me and to mine? Could my wretchedness give you blifs, I should almost think myself blessed in being wretched, my Harry.

I now prepared to execute the last command of my angel, and consign to earth the little that was earthly in her. But when our domestics understood that all that was left of their loved mistress was now going to be taken away from them for ever, they broke into tears anew, and set no bounds to their lamentations.

Her desolate father was desirous of attending the funeral, but on my knees, I dissuaded him from it, as I was assured it would burst in twain the already over-stretched thread of his age and infirmities. He then insisted on having the lid of the coffin removed, and bending over, he cast his old body on the corpse: again he rose and gazed upon it; and clapping his hands with a shout, Is this my world, he cried, the whole of my possessions? Are you the one that was once my little prattling Matty, the play-fellow of my knees, the laughter away of care, who brought cheer to my heart and warmth to my bosom? Are you the one for whom, alone, I spent my nights in thought and my days in application? Is this all that is left, then, of my length of labours? O, my spark of life is quenched! in thee, my Matty, my Matty, the flowing fountain of my existence is dried up for ever.

There is something exceedingly solemn and affecting, my cousin, in the circumstances and apparatus of our funerals; they are oppressive even to minds that are no way concerned or interested in the death of the party lamented. Though I grieved no more for my Matty, though I was as assured of her bliss as I was of my own being; yet when the gloom of the pro-

cession was gathered around me ; when I heard the wailing of the many families whom her charity had sustained ; when I heard the bitter sobbings of the servants, whom her sweetness had so endearingly attached to her person ; when all joined to bewail themselves as lost in her loss ; my heart died, as it were, within me, and I should have been suffocated on the spot, had I not given instant way to the swell of my sorrows.

The tempest of the soul, Madam, like that of the elements, can endure but for a season. The passion of Mr Golding, on the interment of every joy and of every hope that he could look for upon earth, within a few weeks subsided, or rather sunk into a solid but sullen peace ; a kind of peace that seemed to say, there is nothing in this universe that can disturb me.

Harry, said he, one evening, I have been thinking of the vision that I have had. Vision, Sir, said I, has my Matty then appeared to you? Yes, he answered, she was the principal part of the vision for these twenty years past. The vision that I mean, my Harry, is the dream of a very long and laborious life. Here have I, by the toil of fifty years application, scraped together and accumulated as much as, in these times, would set Kings at con-

Her desolate father was desirous of attending the funeral, but on my knees, I dissuaded him from it, as I was assured it would burst in twain the already over-stretched thread of his age and infirmities. He then insisted on having the lid of the coffin removed, and bending over, he cast his old body on the corpse: again he rose and gazed upon it; and clapping his hands with a shout, Is this my world, he cried, the whole of my possessions? Are you the one that was once my little prattling Matty, the play-fellow of my knees, the laughter away of care, who brought cheer to my heart and warmth to my bosom? Are you the one for whom, alone, I spent my nights in thought and my days in application? Is this all that is left, then, of my length of labours? O, my spark of life is quenched! in thee, my Matty, my Matty, the flowing fountain of my existence is dried up for ever.

There is something exceedingly solemn and affecting, my cousin, in the circumstances and apparatus of our funerals; they are oppressive even to minds that are no way concerned or interested in the death of the party lamented. Though I grieved no more for my Matty, though I was as assured of her bliss as I was of my own being; yet when the gloom of the pro-

cession was gathered around me ; when I heard the wailing of the many families whom her charity had sustained ; when I heard the bitter sobbings of the servants, whom her sweetness had so endearingly attached to her person ; when all joined to bewail themselves as lost in her loss ; my heart died, as it were, within me, and I should have been suffocated on the spot, had I not given instant way to the swell of my sorrows.

The tempest of the soul, Madam, like that of the elements, can endure but for a season. The passion of Mr Golding, on the interment of every joy and of every hope that he could look for upon earth, within a few weeks subsided, or rather sunk into a solid but sullen peace ; a kind of peace that seemed to say, there is nothing in this universe that can disturb me.

Harry, said he, one evening, I have been thinking of the vision that I have had. Vision, Sir, said I, has my Matty then appeared to you? Yes, he answered, she was the principal part of the vision for these twenty years past. The vision that I mean, my Harry, is the dream of a very long and laborious life. Here have I, by the toil of fifty years application, scraped together and accumulated as much as, in these times, would set Kings at con-

36 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

tention, and be accounted a worthy cause for spilling the blood of thousands ; and yet what are these things to me, or of what value in themselves more than the stones and rubbish that make our pavement before the door ? I have been hungering and thirsting after the goods of this world, I have acquired all that it could give me, and now my soul, like a sick stomach, disgorges the whole. I then took one of his hands, and pressing it tenderly between mine, O, my father ! I cried, my dear, dear father, O, that I might be made sons and daughters, and every sort of kindred to you ! all that I am and have should gladly be spent in bringing any kind of comfort to you, my father !

In about a fortnight after, as I entered his apartment to bid him good-morrow, I observed that his countenance had much altered from what it was the evening before, that he looked deeply dejected, and seemed to breathe with difficulty.

Are not you well, Sir ? No, says he, my spirits are greatly oppressed. I find that I must leave you shortly ; I believe that I must go suddenly, but where to ? That is the question, the very terrible question, the very question of any importance in heaven or on earth. Sure, Sir, said I that can be no question to you, whose

whole life has been a continual course of righteousness, of daily worship to God, and good will to all men. If you have any sins to account for, they must be covered tenfold by the multitude of your charities.

Talk not, Harry, said he, of the filthy rags of my own righteousness. I am far from the confidence of the boastful Pharisee; alas, I have not even that of the poor and humble publican, for I dare not look up to say, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!" wherefore then do you speak of having finished my course toward God and toward man? It is but lately, very lately, that I set out upon it, and I am cut short before I have got within sight of the goal. Yes, Harry, I fear, I know I feel, that there is no salvation for me.

You amaze me, Sir, said I, you terrify me to death. If there is no salvation for such as you, what a depth of perdition opens for the rest of mankind?

I would you could convince me, he cried. I want to be comforted; I desire comfort, any kind of consolation: but I feel my condemnation within myself. Moreover, I see every text of the gospel of the words of life terribly marshalled and set in broad array against me. What text, Sir? said I; I am sure I know of no

38 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

texts that bring terror or condemnation to the just. Ah, Harry, he replied, justice is of the law and the circumcision, and has nothing to do with the new covenant or the new man. For what says the great Apostle? "Circumcision availeth nothing, neither uncircumcision, but a new creature." For Christ himself has said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Again, the same Apostle saith, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man:" and again, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." Now, if all these corresponding expressions of being "born again" a new creature, a new man, an inward man, Christ formed in us," &c. are to be glossed and explained away, as meaning little more than a state of moral sentiments and moral behaviour, there can be nothing of real import in the gospel of Christ.

Again, hear what the Redeemer saith: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Again, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Again, "Whosoever he

“ be of you that forsaketh not all that he
“ hath, he cannot be my disciple.”

If these things, I cried, are to be taken according to the apparent sense and import of the letter, neither the teachers of the gospel, nor those who are taught, can be saved.

Therefore, replied he, it is said, that
“ Many be called, but few chosen.” And again, “ Enter ye in at the strait gate ;
“ for wide is the gate, and broad is the
“ way that leadeth to destruction, and
“ many there be which go in thereat : be-
“ cause strait is the gate, and narrow is
“ the way which leadeth unto life, and
“ few there be that find it.” O my Harry, my Harry, our lives have been employed in seeking and “ loving the world
“ and the things of the world,” therefore
“ the love of the Father could not be in
“ us.” O that I had never been born !
O thou God, whose tribunal, at this hour, is set up so tremendously against me, at length I feel the propriety of thy precepts, in rejecting the world and all that is therein ; for what can they yield, save a little food and raiment to bodily corruption, or incitements to that pride which cast Lucifer into a gulph, that now opens before me without a bottom !

As I trembled and had nothing to answer, I proposed to bring some of our clergy to him. No, Harry, no, says he, I will have none of their worldly comforts; I will not cast my soul upon blattered expectations. Can they persuade me that I am one of the few that are chosen? Can they tell me wherein I have striven to enter at the strait gate, wherein many shall seek to enter but shall not be able?

Here he sunk into a fit of agonizing desperation, so that a cold dew broke forth from all parts of his body, and fell, drop after drop, down his ghastly and fearful countenance. Never, Madam, never did I feel such a kind of anguishing horror as I then felt; I was affrighted and all frozen to my inmost soul.—Haste, my dear Sir, exclaimed Lady Maitland, make haste through this part of your narration, I beseech you! I also feel for myself, I am terrified to the last degree.

At length, continued Mr Clinton, I recollected myself a little. My master, I cried, my father, my dearest father, since you will not take comfort in your own righteousness, take comfort in that of him who was made righteousness for you. Do you not now reject the world? do you not now deny yourself? I do, I do, he said;

I detest the one and the other. And do you not feel that you are wholly a compound of sin and death? Ay, he cried, there is the weight, there is the mountain under which I sink for ever. Come then to Christ, my father, heavy laden as you are, and he will, questionless, embrace you and be rest to you, my father! I would come, Harry, he cried, but I dare not, I am not able. Strive, my father; do but turn to him, and he will more than meet you. Cry out, with sinking Peter, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" and he will catch you with the hand of his ever-ready salvation.

Here his countenance began to settle into an earnest composure, and his eyes were turned and fixed upward: while his old and enfeebled body continued to labour under the symptoms of near dissolution. At length he started, and seizing my hand with a dying pressure, There is comfort, Harry, there is comfort! he cried, and expired.

I was now cast, once more, upon a strange and friendless world. All the interests of my heart were buried with this family; and I seemed to myself, as without kindred or connections in the midst of mankind. Your dear mama, indeed, sometimes called to condole with me, and

water my losses with her tears; and in her, and you, my cousin, young as you then were, was locked up and centered the whole stock that I had left of endearing sensations.

As the scenes of my former happiness served daily and nightly to render me more wretched by a sad recollection, I determined to quit my house and to take private lodgings. For this purpose I summoned Mr Golding's domestics; and, as he had made no will, I first paid them their wages, and then gave them such pretended legacies as brought their tears and their blessings in a shower upon me.

As soon as I had discharged all, except the two favourite servants of my master and my Matty, I desired that John, our little old man, should be sent to me.

John, said I, as he entered, here is a bill for five hundred pounds, which our good old master has left you, in token of his acknowledgment of your true and loving services, and to help, with what you have saved, to soften and make easy the bed of death in your old age. Do you mean to part with me, Sir? said John, seemingly thankful and unconcerned about the gift which I had offered him. Indeed, John, said I, in my present state of dejection, attendance of any kind would but be an incum-

brance to me. Then, Sir, you may keep your bounty to yourself, for I shall break my heart before five-and-twenty hours are over. Nay, John, said I, I am far from turning you from me; stay with me as my friend and welcome, but not as my servant; and I shall see the comfort of old times in always seeing you about me. Thank you, thank you, Sir, he cried, I will not disturb you with my tears; but I should die unblest, I should die unblest, if I died out of your presence! so saying, he rushed from me in a fit of restrained passion.

I then sent for my wife's maid, whom I formerly mentioned. She had just heard of my discharging the other servants, and entered with a sad and alarmed countenance. Come near, Susan, I am going to part with you, said I; come to me, and give me a farewell kiss. She approached with downcast looks, when, taking her in my arms, I pressed and kissed her repeatedly, and scarce withheld my tears. O, my girl, my Matty's precious girl, I cried, I am not forgetful of your love, your honour, and your disinterestedness toward us. Here, my Susy, your darling mistress presents you with this bill of a thousand pounds, and, if you chuse, I will give you cash for it within a quarter of an hour. This, how-

ever, does not discharge me from my regard and attention to you. You are of a helpless sex, my Susy, that is subject to many impositions and calamities; wherefore, when this sum shall fail you, come to me again, come to me as to your friend, as to your debtor, Susy, and I will repeat my remembrance, and repeat it again, as you may happen to have occasion; for, while I have sixpence left, the favourite friend of my Matty shall not want her proportion.

Here the grateful and amazed creature threw herself on the floor. She cried aloud, while the family heard and echoed to her lamentations. She clasped my knees, she kissed my feet again and again. I could not disengage myself, I could not force her from me. O, my master, she cried, my all that is left to me of my adored, my angel mistress! must I then be torn from you? must you live without the service of the hands and heart of your Susy: But I understand your regard and care for me my master! it is a cruel and naughty world, and must be complied with.

Here I compelled her to rise, and kissing her again, I turned hastily to the chamber where my Matty's corps had been laid; and bolting the door, and casting myself on the bed, I broke into tears, and at length wept myself to sleep.

While I was preparing to leave the once-loved mansion, I found, in Mr Golding's cabinet, a parchment that much surprised me. On my marriage, he had proposed to make a settlement of his fortune upon me, which, however, I obstinately refused to accept; whereupon, without my privity, he got this deed perfected, which contained an absolute conveyance to me of all his worldly effects and possessions; and this again renewed in me the tender and endearing remembrance of each of those kindnesses and benefits which he had formerly conferred upon me.

I now found myself in possession of near a million of money, which, however, in my disposition of mind at the time, appeared no worthier than so much lumber in a waste room. And I know not how it was that, through the subsequent course of my life, although I was by no means of an economical turn, though I never sued for a debt, nor gave a denial to the wants of those who asked, nor turned away from him that desired to borrow of me, yet uncoveted wealth came pouring in upon me.

It was not without some sighs and a plentiful shower, that I departed from the seat of all my past enjoyments. I took lodgings within a few doors of your

father ; and my little household consisted of my favourite Irishman, my little old man, two footmen, and an elderly woman who used daily to dress a plain dish of meat for us.

It was then, my fairest cousin, that your opening graces and early attractions drew me daily to your house ; my heart was soothed and my griefs cheered by the sweetness of your prattle ; and I was melted down and minted anew, as it were, by the unaffected warmth and innocence of your caresses.

As I had no faith in dreams, not even in that of my Matty, I thought it impossible that I should ever marry again. I was therefore resolved, in my own mind, to make you my heir, and to endow you in marriage, with the best part of my fortune.—But you are a little pale, Madam, you look dejected and fatigued. If you please, I will suspend my narration for the present ; and in the morning, if you chuse it, as early as you will, I shall renew and proceed in my insignificant history.—Here he pressed her hand to his lips. She withdrew with a tearful eye and a heaving heart ; and, the next day, he resumed his narration, as followeth.

C H A P. XV.

THOUGH you, my cousin, at that time, were a great consolation to me, and a sweet lightener of my afflictions, yet the griefs of heart which I had suffered were not without their effect: at length they fell on my constitution, and affected my nerves or spirits; I think our doctors pretty much confound the one with the other. Accordingly, I was advised to travel for change of air and exercise; and I was preparing for my journey, when there happened in my family the most extraordinary instance of an ever-watchful providence that occurs to my memory.

My little old man John began to decline apace, and at length took to his bed; and, having a tender friendship for him, I went to sit beside him, and to comfort him the best I could. John, said I, are you afraid to die? No, Sir, not at all, not in the least: I long to be dissolved and to be with our loving Lord. Indeed, John, said I, I am inclined to think you have been a very good liver. A dog, Sir, a mere dog, desperately wicked, the vilest of sinners! I am a murderer too, my master, there's

blood upon my head. Blood ! said I, and started. Yes, Sir, replied John ; but then the blood that was shed for me is stronger and more precious than the blood that was shed by me. Blood, however, John, is a very terrible thing ; are you not afraid to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ ? By no means, my dear master ; I have long since laid the burden of my sins before him, for I had nothing else to bring to him, nothing else to offer him ; and he has accepted them and me, and my conscience is at rest in him. Then, John, there may be yet room for hope. There is assurance, my master ; for I have laid hold upon the rock, and cannot be shaken.

But how do you intend to dispose of your worldly substance ? All that I have, Sir, I got with you and my old master ; and where I found it, even there I resolve to leave it. Indeed, John, I will not finger a penny of your money. How much may it amount to ? Eight hundred and thirty-seven pounds, Sir, or thereabout. And have you no relations of your own ? Not one living that I know of. Then think of some one else, for no part of it shall lie on my conscience, I assure you.

I have read somewhere or other, Sir, of a great king who was advised of God, in a dream, to take the very first man,

whom he should meet the next morning, to be his partner in the government. Now, if it pleases you, my Master, I will follow the like counsel; and whosoever shall be first found before our door, let that person be the owner and inheritor of my substance. It shall be even as you say; I will go and see whom God shall be pleased to send to us.

Accordingly I went and opened our door, when a woman, who had nearly passed, turned about at the noise, and perceiving me, came up and said, A little charity, Sir, for the sake of him who had not where to lay his head!

I was strongly affected by the manner in which she addressed me, and eyeing her attentively, I observed that she was clean, though meanly apparelled; wherefore, to make a further trial whether our adventure was likely to prove prosperous or not, I slipped a guinea into her hand, and desired her to go about her business. Accordingly she curtsied and went from me a few steps, when looking into her hand, she turned suddenly back; Sir, Sir, says she, here had like to have been a sad mistake; you meant to give me a shilling, and you have given me a whole guinea. It was, says I, a very great mistake, in-

deed; but, be pleased to come in, and we will try to rectify our errors.

Here I took her into the chamber where John lay, and, having constrained her to sit down, I put my hand into my pocket. Here, good woman, said I, here are ten guineas for you, to make you some amends for the mistake I was guilty of in giving you but one. The poor creature could scarcely credit her senses, but, raising her eyes in ecstasy, and dropping from the chair upon her knees, she was proceeding to bless me, but I peremptorily insisted on her retaking her seat. Mistress, said I, be pleased to stay your prayers for the present, what I want from you is the story of your life: tell me who and what you are, without suppressing any circumstance, or concealing the faults of which you have been guilty, and I will make you the mistress of twenty guineas, that shall be added to what you have already received.

Sir; said she, you frighten me; my story is a very unhappy and a very foolish story, and cannot be of the smallest consequence to you. Sure you are too much of the gentleman to desire to ensnare me, and indeed I know not of any thing whereby I may be ensnared. Wherefore,

bountiful Sir, unto you, as unto heaven, I will open my whole soul, without seeking to know why you look into the concerns of such a worm as I am.

I am the daughter of a farmer in Essex, my maiden name was Elenor Damer. I was married early in life, to a man who kept a chandler's shop in a little lane that led to Tower Hill, his name was Barnaby Tirrel. Barnaby Tirrel! exclaimed John, are you very sure that his name was Barnaby Tirrel? Peace, John, I cried; whatever you may know of this man, or of any other matter, I command you not to interrupt the woman till she has finished her story.— She then continued :

I had neither brother nor sister, Sir, but one brother, a twin-brother; and we loved one another, as though there was no body else in the world to be loved.

About three years before my marriage, my brother Tommy, then a sweet pretty lad, took to a sea-faring life, and went from me, I know not where, upon a voyage that I was told was a very great way off; and so I cried day and night, as many tears after him as would have served me to swim in.

My husband was very fond of me, and when he used to see me cry, while he spoke

of my Tommy, he would kiss me and try to comfort me, and say that he wished for nothing more than his return to Old England, that he might welcome him and love him as much as I did.

One night, on the ninth month of my marriage, as I sat moping and alone, my husband being abroad upon some business, I heard a knocking at the door, which was opened by our little servant girl. And then, before you could say this, in leaped my brother, and caught me fast in his dear arms.

I gave a great shout for joy, you may be sure; and pushing my Tommy from me, and pulling him to me again, and again, we embraced, and cried, and kissed, and embraced and kissed again, as though we could never be tired.

In the mean while, the door being open, my cruel Barnaby entered, unperceived by either of us, and seeing a strange man so fond and so familiar with me, he opened a long clasped knife which he had in his pocket, and rushing up, he gave my darling brother three stabs in the body, before he could speak a word, or turn about to defend himself. Then, casting down the knife, in a minute he was out of the house, and I never saw him more.

For a time, I stood like a stone, and then giving a great shriek, I fainted and fell on my brother as he lay weltering in his blood.

Our little Mary, in the while, being frightened almost to death, ran about like a wild thing, and alarmed the street. Our neighbours crouded in, and sent for the next surgeon. My brother's wounds were probed and dressed, and he was laid in our spare bed.

Mean time being forward with child, I fell into strong and untimely labour, and after very grievous travail, was delivered of a boy, who was christened and called James, after my dear and lately deceased father.

No pains of my own, however, kept me from enquiring after the dear and lamented brother who had been killed, as I supposed, for his love to me. But his youth and natural strength carried him through all dangers. In three months he was up and about, as well as ever; and, in less than three more, he set out on another voyage, from whence he never, never, O never returned!

Before he went abroad, my dear and sweet fellow had left me a note of hand for the receipt of his wages. But in five years after, I heard that he was cast away

or killed by the Barbary people: and, though I went and went again, in the middle of my wants, and in the middle of my sorrows, to ask and to petition for his pay from the Admiralty, I never could get an answer of any profit or any comfort.

My little Jemmy, however, grew and throve and prated apace, and was my only prop under all my afflictions. My husband indeed, had left me in pretty circumstances; and had he but stayed with me, we should have prospered above our fellows. But what can a woman do, single, weak, and unprotected? I was imposed upon by some, by others I was refused payment for the goods that I had given, and at length I was reduced to poverty, and obliged to shut up shop.

Mean time I had spared no cost on the bringing up of my Jemmy. I had given him school-learning, and he now was grown a very towardsly and clever boy: and, having taken to messages, my sweet fellow, every night used to bring to me whatever he had earned in the day-time.

In the loss of my husband and brother, in the loss of my Barnaby, and in the loss of my Tommy, to be sure I had grief upon grief; so that my health went from me, and next my strength went

from me, and I was not able to work at the washing-business as before. But this didn't signify much, while my child had his health; for he had now got a porter's place in the custom-house, and, young as he was, he willingly carried heavy burdens, to have the pleasure of bringing home his hard earnings to his mammy. But about six weeks ago, may it please your honour, my dear boy fell ill of a quartan ague, as they call it, under which he, and his mother's heart, still continue to labour.

As soon as she had ended her short narrative, Well, John, said I, methinks this business will do; in my opinion you have got a very worthy inheritor of your fortune: what say you to it, John? First, Sir, let me ask her a question or two, if you please. Honest woman, draw your chair a little nearer to me, I pray you: And now, tell me the truth; Did you ever love your husband? Yes, dearly, indeed, very dearly did I love him; for he had loved me very dearly, till that miserable night. But when, as I thought, he had killed my brother, I hated him as much as I had ever loved him before. But then again, when my Tommy had recovered of his wounds, I sent far and near to inquire after him and find him

out ; and when I could learn no tidings of him, I put it into all the printed papers, that Thomas Damer was well recovered, and that Barnabas Tirrel, who had wounded him, might return, without danger, to his wife and infant.

And he is returned, shouted John, he is returned, my Nelly !—your barbarous and bloody husband, who stabbed your brother, and left you and your infant to famish, he is returned to you, my Nelly ! and, in his death, he shall make you amends for all the sufferings which he brought upon you, during his lifetime ! But, my master, my dearest master, send immediately for my child, my Jemmy, I beseech you, that, bad as I am myself, I may give him a father's blessing before I die.

I was surprised and affected, Madam, beyond expression, by incidents that were at once so wonderful and so tender ; and I directly sent servants and a sedan chair for James, with orders to have him carefully and warmly wrapt up ; for what his mother told me of him had already given me a very strong prejudice in his favour.

Meanwhile, Mrs Tirrel had sunk on her knees by her husband's bed-side, and was plentifully pouring forth her tears

upon him ; partly for joy of having found him, and partly for grief of having found him in that condition.

O my Nelly, my Nelly, cried Barnabas; had I known who the person was whose blood I drew that terrible night, I would sooner have thrust my knife into my own heart, than into any part of the body of that dear brother of yours. But I was old and ugly, you know : and you were young and handsome ; and jealousy is a mad devil, that rages in the breast like hell-fire ; it never knew how to spare, but tears and consumes every thing that comes within its reach.

At length James was brought to us ; and, as we were in his father's apartments, a chamber no way adorned, James entered without any respect to persons. He was a tall and comely youth, but very pale and lean ; and, as it was one of his well days, he walked in without help. He had barely been told that his mother sent for him in a hurry, so that he entered with a visible alarm in his countenance.

What is the matter, my dear mother ? says he ; alas, I am little able to help you at present. I hope nothing has happened that is suddenly distressful. Nothing a-miss, my child, more than that your dear father, for whom I have fought and been

88 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

sighing this many a year, your father lies dangerously ill in this very bed, my Jemmy. Am I then so blessed, cried the boy, as to see and embrace a father? O my child, exclaimed the old man, and eagerly stretched his arms toward him, come to my bosom, thou only offspring of my bowels! I may now say, with blessed Jacob, let me die, let me die, since I have seen thy face, and thou art alive, my son!

I would at any time give a thousand pounds, my cousin, for a tenth of the enjoyment that I then had, in the feelings which God poured into the hearts of this little family, on their so very unexpected and marvellous a meeting. It appeared to me, however, that young James even exceeded his parents in love; and this gave me such a cordial attachment to him, that from that hour to this we have never been sundered. He never failed nor forsook me; and, at this very day, he is my respected friend, and the superintendent of my family.

John, otherwise Barnabas, continued to linger, for about a fortnight longer, and than departed quite happy, and without a groan. During the same space also, James was daily attended by my own physician, and was nearly re-established in his health.

Being then intent on my departure, I sent for Mrs Tirrel. Mrs Tirrel, says I, I should be much inclined to take your James along with me, if I did not think you would grieve overmuch in his absence. No, no, Sir, said she, I would to heaven I were, myself, a young man for your sake. I desire no better either of him or for him, than that he should live and die faithfully and lovingly in your service.

When Mr Clinton came to this part of his story, a messenger entered in fearful haste, and delivered a letter to Lady Maitland. As soon as she had run it over, My dearest Sir, she cried, I must leave you this instant. I lately made you an offer of a hundred thousand pounds; and now I know not that I have so many shillings upon earth. I am here informed, that the trustee of all my affairs has absconded and made his escape to France; but I must hurry to town, and inquire after this business. So saying, she curtsied, and suddenly withdrew, without giving her cousin time to make a tender of his services.

The next morning, Mr Clifton ordered his chariot to the door, and hastened to attend her Ladyship at her house in London; but there he was told, that she had set out for Dover about an hour before;

60 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

and he returned, much dejected and grieved on her account.

In about three weeks after, Mr Clement, with his young pupil, came home, quite lightened of the money they had taken abroad. Mr Fenton, for so we shall call him again, gave Clement a friendly embrace, and took Harry to his caresses, as though he had returned from a long and dangerous voyage.

Well Clement, said Mr Fenton, what account have you to give us of your expedition? An account, Sir, that would be extremely displeasing to any man living except yourself: in short, our young gentleman here, has plunged you about a thousand pounds in debt, over the large sums that we carried with us. I hope the objects were worthy, said Mr Fenton. Wonderfully worthy, indeed, Sir; I never saw such tender and affecting scenes. Then I shall be overpaid and enriched by the narration.

Here, Harry inquired impatiently for Mrs Clement and his friend Ned; and being told that they were on a visit to the widow Neighbourly, he took a hasty leave for the present, and away he flew to embrace them.

As soon as he was gone, Sir, said Mr Clement, I cannot think that there is, in

the world, such another boy as yours. I will leave to himself the detail of our adventures in the several prisons; they had such an effect on his heart, that they cannot but have made a deep impression on his memory; so I shall only tell you of what happened in our way to London.

As we were chatting and walking leisurely along the road, a poor man before us happened to drop in a fit of the falling-sickness. When Harry saw the writhings and convulsions in which he lay, he turned pale, and looked vastly frightened; and, seizing me under the arm, he cried, Come, come away! and hurried me off as fast as he could. But we had not gone far, till his pace began to abate, and stopping, and hesitating, Let us turn, let us turn, Mr Clement, he cried, let us go back again and help the poor man! We then returned hastily, and raising his head, we kept him from bruising it against the ground. I then forced open his clenched hands, and having chafed the palms a while, he began to recover, and soon came to himself. Meanwhile Harry's fright was not yet quite over. He seemed willing to get away from the object of his terror, and, putting his hand in his pocket, and giving him all the silver he had, he wished him better health, and away he went.

We had not gone above half a mile further, when I saw a little girl, in a field on the right hand, endeavouring to drive a cow through a small gate into the road, in order to be milked, as I suppose, by her mother ; but the cow kicked up her heels, and proved wanton and refractory, and ran hither and thither, and would not be guided. The poor child then set up a cry of as bitter distress, as if all that was valuable in the world was going to ruin. Harry gave a ready ear to the sound of lamentation, and seeing the plight that the poor thing was in, he suddenly crossed the road, above ankle-deep in dirt, and, leaping the ditch, he proved nimbler than the cow, and, driving her through the pass, he turned her into the way that the child would have her go.

That morning, indeed, was to Harry a morning of petty adventures. By the time that we approached the suburbs, we had nearly overtaken a grown girl who carried a basket of eggs on her head. A great lubberly boy, just then, passed by us at a smart pace, and, tripping up to the girl, gave the basket a tip with his hand, and dashed all the eggs into mash against a stony part of the road, and, again taking to his heels, run on as before. Immediately Harry's indignation was kindled.

dled, and, setting out at top speed, he soon overtook him, and gave him several smart strokes, with his little cane, across the shoulders. The fellow then turned upon Harry, and gave him a furious blow with his fist over the head, while I hastened to his relief, as I perceived that the other was quite an overmatch for him. But, before I arrived, our hero had put a quick end to the combat; for, springing from the ground, he darted his head full into the nose and mouth of his adversary, who instantly roared out, and, seeing his own blood come pouring down, he once more took to flight, while Harry continued to press upon him, and laboured him at pleasure, till he judged that he had beaten him to the full value of the eggs.

Meanwhile the poor girl, wholly unmindful of what passed, remained wailing and wringing her hands over the wreck of her merchandise. The voice of a Syren could not so powerfully have attracted and recalled Harry from the length he had gone; he returned with speed to her, and I followed. My poor girl, says he, where were you going with those eggs? To market, master, says she. And what did you expect to get for them? About five shillings, Sir; and I had promised my daddy and mammy to lay it out in shoes

and stockings 'for my little brothers and sisters ; and so I must now bear all the blame of the poor things going barefoot. Here she again set up her wailings, and her tears poured down afresh.

Harry then desired me to lend him ten shillings, and turning to the mourner, Hold out your two hands, my poor girl, he cried: then, putting five shillings into each hand, here is the payment for your eggs, said he; and here are five shillings more, though I fear it is too little to pay you for all the tears they cost you.

Never did I see so sudden, so great a change in any countenance. Surprise, gratitude, ecstasy, flashed from her eyes, and gave a joyous flush to the muscling of her aspect. She hurried her money into her bosom, and dropping on her knees in the dirt, and seizing hold of Harry's hand, she squeezed and kissed it repeatedly, without being able to utter a word; while Harry's eyes began to fill, and, endeavouring to disengage himself, he made off as fast as he could, from such thanks as he thought he had no way deserved.

This, Sir, was the last of our adventures going to London: But had you seen us, on our return, about two hours ago, you would have wondered at the ~~miry~~ plight into which we were put, by helping pas-

fengers up with their bundles, that had tumbled into the dirt ; or by assisting to raise cattle that had fallen under their carriages ; for master Harry would compel me to be as busy and active in matters of charity as himself.

However, Sir, I am to tell you, that Harry, with all his excellencies of person, heart, and understanding, will be accounted a mere idiot among people of distinction, if he is not permitted to enter into some of the fashionable foibles and fashionable vices of the age.

We were taking a walk in the Mall, when we were met by the Earl of Mansfield, who expressed great joy at seeing his old acquaintance, as he called him ; and he pressed us so earnestly to dinner, that we could not, in manners, refuse him.

There was a vast concourse of company, especially of the little quality of both sexes, who came to pay their respects to young Lord Bottom and his sister the Lady Louisa.

Harry was received and saluted by Lady Mansfield and the young Lord, without any appearance of the old animosity. Some time after dinner, a large packet of letters was brought in to the Earl, and, mak-

ing his excuse to Harry alone, he rose from the table, and retired to his closet.

Lord Bottom and his sister then led the young males and females to an adjoining apartment, where several card-tables were laid ; and I began to tremble for the credit of my pupil on the occasion, as I knew him to be a novice in such matters.

In the mean time, the remaining ladies and gentlemen divided into two or three parties at ombre ; and I sauntered about the room, admiring the prints of the Ariadne and the Aurora that were taken from Guido, as also some capital paintings that the Earl had brought from Italy.

I had spent above an hour in this pleasing amusement, and had nearly made the tour of the whole dining-room ; when as I stood at a little distance behind my lady's chair, seeming inattentive to any thing that passed, Lord Bottom entered on tiptoe, and, tripping up to his mother, and tittering and whispering in her ear, What do you think, mamma, said he ? sure Master Fenton is a fool, a downright fool, upon my honour ! He does not know a single card in the whole pack ; he does not know the difference between the ace of hearts and the nine of clubs. I do not think either that he knows any thing of the difference or value of coin ; for, as

we passed through the hall to-day, a beggar asked for a halfpenny, and I saw him slip a shilling into his hand. Indeed, mamma, he is the greatest fool that ever I knew; and yet, poor fellow, he does not seem to know any thing of the matter himself.

During this oration of Lord Bottom on the virtues of his new friend, I felt my whole body glow and tingle with concern, and, soon after, Harry entered with the rest of the small quality. Master Fenton, cries my lady, I beg to speak with you. Don't you know the cards, my dear? No, indeed, Madam. Can't you play at dice? No, Madam. Can you play at draughts, polish, or chess? Not at all, Madam. Why then, my dear, I must tell you, that all your father's fortune will never introduce you among people of any breeding or of any fashion. Can you play at no kind of game, Master Harry? A little at fox and geese, Madam. And pray, my dear, said my lady smiling, which of the parties do you espouse? The part of the geese, Madam. I thought as much, pertly, cried out my Lord Bottom; whereupon a loud laugh was echoed through the room.

Here my lady chid the company, and calling Harry to her again, for he had gone something aloof, Tell me, I pray you,

said she, why you espouse the part of the geese? Because, Madam, I always wish that simplicity should get the better of fraud and cunning.

The Countess here looked astonished; and having gazed a while at him, and caught and kissed him eagerly, You are a noble fellow, she cried, and all must be fools or mad that ever shall take you for the one or the other.

The elder gentry here laid their cards aside, and desired the young ones to set about some play. Lady Louisa proposed draw-gloves, or questions and commands, and to it they went.

Among the females was one Miss Uppish, sole heiress to a vast fortune. Tho' her person was deformed, her face was the picture of confident disdain; and scarce any one could speak to her, or look at her, without being told of the contempt she had for them, by the side-glance of her eye, the writhing of her neck, and tossing up of her head.

In the course of the play our Harry was commanded to put the candle into the hand of Miss Uppish, and then to kiss the candlestick; which command he obeyed literally, by giving her the candle, and kissing the candlestick, which he held in his own hand.

Hereupon a great shout was set up in the young assembly, and, O the fool, the senseless creature; the fool, the fool, the fool! was repeated throughout; while Lord Bottom laughed, and danced about in the impatience of his joy.

I was amazed that Harry's countenance seemed no way disconcerted by all this ridicule. At length Lady Mansfield called him to her. How, my dear, could you be guilty of such an error, she said; did not you know, that when you gave the candle into the hand of the young lady, she became the candlestick, and it was *her* you should have kissed? Harry then approached to her ladyship's ear, and, in a pretty loud whisper, said, I did not like the metal, Madam, that the candlestick was made of. Again Lady Mansfield looked surprised, and said, You are a sly rogue, a very sly rogue, upon my honour, and have sense enough to dupe the wisest of us all.

Jemmy Bottom, cried my lady aloud, come here! I can't but tell you, Jemmy, that you have behaved yourself extremely ill to your young friend here, who might have improved you by his example, as much as he has honoured you by his visit. I must further tell you, Jemmy Bottom, that, whenever you pique yourself on degrading Master Fenton, you only pride in

your own abasement, and glory in your shame. Hereupon I got up, and, leaving our compliments for the Earl, I carried off my young charge, for fear of our falling into any further disgrace.

While Harry is abroad, said Mr Fenton, be pleased to give me a general sketch of the manner in which you disposed of your money. In the first place, Sir, answered Clement, you will find, by this list, that, for little more than the five hundred pounds allotted, we released ninety-five prisoners, whose debts amounted from forty shillings to about twelve pounds per man. These, in the general, had been journeymen tailors or weavers, or professors of other inferior crafts; and, as they wanted means or encouragement for exercising their respective occupations in goal, they subsisted on the pence which they got by begging at the grates, or on their dividends of occasional sums which were sent for their relief by charitable individuals. Nearly all of them were thin in flesh, and extremely shabby in cloathing; and yet they could hardly be said to excite compassion, as they appeared so cheerful and unfeeling of their own wretchedness. Neither was there one of them, that I could learn a single circumstance of, whose story was worth reciting.

Some, however, were of a quality much superior to this class. Among others, there was a French Marquis and a German Prince; the Prince had been put under arrest by his caterer, and the Marquis by his tailor; so that something less than fifty pounds set them both at liberty.

While the keeper of the Fleet Prison was making out a list, for us, of the principal debtors, Harry and I took a turn about the court, and observed two fellows, in liveries, bearing several smoking covers, up the stone-stairs, to a front dining-room. This surprised me, and gave me the curiosity to inquire what prisoners it could be who lived in so expensive and superb a manner. Sir, said the under-keeper, there are few men now at liberty, near so wealthy as this gentleman, who has done us the honour to set up his staff of rest in our house. His name is Sink. He is an attorney and an old batchelor, turned of sixty years of age. He is in for several sums, amounting to upward of nine thousand pounds, and he is reputed to be worth above double that money.

During the last twenty years, he behaved himself with the strictest probity toward all men, and with the strictest appearance of piety toward God. In the dark, in frost and snow, and all inclemencies,

cies of weather, he never missed attending morning-service at church. He was equally solicitous to be at evening prayer; and, whatever company he chanced to have with him, or how important soever the business in which he was engaged, the moment he heard the bell ring, he would huddle up his papers and break away without ceremony. He was eager in his inquiries to know where the sacrament was soonest to be administered, and he never missed receiving it at least once in the week. Whenever he heard any profaneness or obscenity in the streets, he would stop to reprove and expostulate with the offender. In short, he so perfectly counterfeited or took off, as they call it, the real Christian, that many looked to see him, like Enoch or Elijah, taken alive into heaven.

This perpetual parade of sanctity gave him such an éclat and unmeasurable credit, that he was left trustee and executor in a multitude of wills; and numbers also deposited their substance in his hands, in order to be laid out at interest on securities, and so forth.

Three months since, about the dawning, as his butcher happened to pass by his door, he heard it open, and turning, saw a number of porters come out heavy

laden. This gave him a kind of suspicion. He let them all pass, and, walking softly after, he stepped up to the hindmost, and offered him half a crown, on condition of his telling him where they were carrying these parcels. That I will, said the porter; for the secret, if such it is, is nothing to me you know. In short, we are carrying them to the wharf to be put on board a boat that waits to take them in.

The butcher said no more, but hurried away to the baker, and, as they both run to the office, they met the brewer by the way. They took out their respective actions, and, taking a constable with them, they seized on good Mr Sink, as he was stepping into a coach and six to make the best of his way to Dover. He would have paid them their money and discharged their actions on the spot; but here the master, in whom he trusted, happened to leave him in the lurch. As he had turned all his effects into money, and his money into paper, he had not at hand wherewith to pay his instant creditors. So they hurried him to goal, and before the banks were open the matter was blown, and action after action came pouring fast upon him.

When he found himself thus at bay
VOL. III. G

he cast aside his disguise, and set them all at defiance. His creditors have since offered to accept ten shillings, and some of them to accept five shillings in the pound; but he swears that he will never pay them a groat; for he is now as liberal of his oaths and impious execrations, as he was lately of his more impious profanation of gospel-phrases. And thus he daily revels in the sensual consumption of those wretches whom he hath so inhumanely defrauded; while hundreds of orphans and widows, and other miserables, perish for want of the sustenance which one infernal appetite devours without remorse. Nay, several of his creditors are, at this very time, famishing in this prison, while they see him feasting so lavishly upon their spoils.

The gorge of my soul, cried Mr Fenton, the very gorge of my soul rises against this dæmon. Can nothing be done to bring him to punishment? Our parliament will surely interfere in such a calling exigence; they will send to the several banks, and take up all the deposits that have been made in his name. Alas, Sir, said Clement, he was already aware of such possibilities, and has entered all his lodgments in feigned names, and to bearer upon demand.

Indeed, continued Clement, I heartily wished, at the time, that the laws of the Grecians and Romans had been in force among us, by which the debtor was given up to be set to labour, whipped, or tortured at the pleasure of the creditor.

God forbid, God forbid! exclaimed Mr Fenton.

When we see mankind divided into the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the sound and the sickly, we are apt to imagine, that health, strength, or opulence, was given to those, and infirmity, want, or weakness appointed to these, as marks of the peculiar favour or disfavour of Providence.

God, however, knows that there is nothing permanently good, or evil, in any of these things. He sees that nothing is a good but virtue, and that nothing is a virtue, save some quality of benevolence. On benevolence, therefore, he builds the happiness of all his intelligent creatures; and, in this our mortal state, (our short apparatus for a long futurity) he has ordained the relative differences of rich and poor, strong and weak, sound and sickly, &c. to exercise us in the offices of that charity, and those affections, which, reflecting and reflected, like mu-

tual light and warmth, can alone make our good to all eternity.

Benevolence produces and constitutes the heaven, or beatitude of God himself: He is no other than an infinite and eternal Good Will: Benevolence must, therefore, constitute the beatitude or heaven of all dependent beings, however infinitely diversified through several departments and subordinations, agreeable to the several natures and capacities of creatures.

God has appointed human power and human wealth, as a ready and sufficient fund for human want and weakness; to which fund, therefore, they have as good a right to resort, as any other creditors have to respective trusts or deposits: for, though poverty and weakness are not creditors by the laws of man, they are creditors by the eternal laws of nature and equity; and must, here or hereafter, bring their debtors to account.

Every man, when he becomes a member of this or that society, makes a deposit of three several sorts of trusts, That of his LIFE, that of his LIBERTY, and that of his PROPERTY.

Now as every man, in his separate or independent state, has by nature the absolute disposal of his property, he can con-

vey the disposal thereof, to society, as amply and absolutely as he was, in his separate right, entitled thereto.

This, however, cannot be said of his life, or of his liberty. He has no manner of right to take away his own life; neither to depart from his own liberty: he cannot therefore convey to others a right and authority which he hath not in himself.

The question then occurs, By what right is it, that the legislative and executive powers of community, appoint some persons to death, and others to imprisonment? My answer is short, and follows:

It is the right, perhaps the duty, of every man to defend his life, right, liberty, and property, and to kill or bind the attempters. This right he can, therefore, convey; and, on such conveyance, it becomes the right and duty of the trustees of society, to put to death, or imprison all who take away, or attempt the life, liberty, or property of any of its members.

This right, however, extends to criminal matters only; and it does not yet appear to me, upon what reason, or right rule, founded in nature or policy, the several societies of mankind have agreed

78 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

to deliver up their members to slavery, to stripes, tortures, or imprisonment, for matters merely civil, such as debts.

Several of the states of Greece, though accounting the rest of the world as Barbarians, and even the Roman republic, during the times of its most boasted policy and freedom, gave up insolvent debtors (without inquiring into the causes or occasions of such insolvency) as slaves, or absolute property, into the hands of their creditors, to be sold at will, or put to labour, or starved, macerated or tortured, in order to give value in vengeance, which they could not give in coin, or other equivalent commodities.

The Jewish or Mosaic law, though allowing sufficiently, as Christ says, for "the hardness of that people's hearts," yet gave perfect enlargement to all Jews who were bondmen, and perfect remission to all Jews who were personal debtors, on every seventh or sabbatical year: and on every seventh sabbatical year, or jubilee, all prisons were thrown open; all slaves, though foreigners or aliens, set at liberty, and even the lands were enfranchised, however mortgaged, or labouring under debt and execution; that all things, animate or inanimate, might have an earnest

of that immunity, and perfect freedom, which God originally intended, and keeps in store for all his creatures.

The laws of Egypt permitted no member to deprive the public of the life, liberty, or labour of any other member, except they were a criminal, not fitting to live, or to be suffered to walk at large. In all cases of debtor and creditor, they equitably appointed value for value, as far as the substance of the debtor could reach; and, in case of insufficiency, the insolvent party was obliged to leave, in pledge, the mummies or preserved bodies of his deceased ancestors, till, by industry or good fortune, either he, or his posterity, should be enabled to redeem them. A matter of refined, as well as charitable policy; as nothing was held more infamous, among the Egyptians, than their inability to produce the mummies of their forefathers.

The laws of Holland, by their late qualifications, seem to acknowledge the iniquity, or inadequateness, of depriving a man of the possibility of earning, merely because he has not an immediate ability to pay. Sensible, therefore, that all men are debtors to God, and reciprocally debtors and creditors to each other, they have ordained, that he who imprisons

80 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

an insolvent debtor, shall pay the proper penalty, of his malevolence or indif-
cretion, by maintaining the party from
whom he takes the ability of maintaining
himself.

It must be admitted, that, were our
laws less severe with respect to debtors;
were people less afraid of a jail on failure
of payment; there would be less credit,
and consequently, less dealing, in this, so
wonderously wealthy and trading a na-
tion. But if our credit were less, would
not our extravagance lessen also? Should
we see such princely tables among people
of the lower class? would so much claret,
spirits, and ale, intoxicate a kingdom?
should we see the value of a German
prince's ransom gorgeously attiring each
of our belle-dames, if neither merchant,
butcher, brewer, laceman, mercer, mil-
liner, nor taylor, would trust?

Many of our poor city-dealers are year-
ly undone, with their families, by cre-
diting persons who are privileged not to
pay, or whose remoteness or power places
them beyond the reach of the law. For,
by the return of *non-invent*. generally
made upon writs, one would be apt to
imagine, that no single sub-sheriff knew
of any such thing as a man of fortune,

within his respective county, throughout the kingdom of Great Britain.

Before money became the medium of commerce, the simple business of the world was carried on by truck, or the commutation of one commodity for another. But when men consented to fix certain rateable values upon money, as a ready and portable equivalent for all sorts of effects, credit was consequently introduced, by the engagements of some, to pay so much money in lieu of such commodities, or to deliver such or such commodities on the advance of so much money, and states found it their interest to support such public credit, by enforcing the performance of such engagements.

By the common law of England, no person, except the king, could take the body of another in execution for debt; neither was this prerogative of the crown extended to the subject till the statute of Marlbridge, ch. 23. in the reign of Henry III.

Many contracts debts, through vanity, or intemperance; or borrow money, or take up goods, with the intention of thieves and robbers, never to make return. When such suffer, they suffer deservedly, in expiation of their guilt. But there are unavoidable damages by water,

81 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

by fire, the crush of power, oppressive landlords, and more oppressive law-suits, death of cattle, failure of crop, failure of payment in others; with thousands of such like casualties, whereby men may become bankrupt, and yet continue blameless. And, in all such cases, one would think that the present ruin was sufficient calamity, without the exertion of law to make that ruin irreparable.

As all the members of a community are interested in the life, liberty, and labours of each other; he who puts the rigour of our laws in execution, by detaining an insolvent brother in goal, is guilty of a fourfold injury: first, he robs the community of the labours of their brother; secondly, he robs his brother of all means of retrieving his shattered fortune; thirdly, he deprives himself of the possibility of payment; and, lastly, he lays an unnecessary burden on the public, who, in charity, must maintain the member whom he in his cruelty confines.

However, since the severity of law is such, that he whose misfortunes have rendered him insolvent must "make satisfaction," (for so the savages esteem it) by surrendering his body to durance for life; it is surely incumbent on our legislators and governors, to make the condi-

tion of the unhappy sufferers as little grievous as may be.

But this most Christian duty, this most humane of all cares, is yet to come. When a debtor is delivered up into the phangs of his goaler, he is consigned to absolute and arbitrary slavery; and woe be to the wretch whose poverty may not have left him a sop for Cerberus. How more than miserable must be the state of those unhappy men who are shut in from all possible redress, or appeal against the despotic treatment of their savage keepers, whose hearts are habitually hardened to all sense of remorse, and whose ears are rendered callous by incessant groans.

We are credibly informed, that it is usual, with such keepers, to amass considerable fortunes from the wrecks of the wretched; to squeeze them by exorbitant charges and illicit demands, as grapes are squeezed in a vine-press, while one drop remains; and then to huddle them together, into naked walls and windowless rooms; having got all they can, and nothing further to regard, save the return of their lifeless bodies to their creditors.

How many of these keepers exact, from their distressed prisoners, seven and eight shillings per week, for rooms that would not rent at a third of that sum, in any

84 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

other part of this city. At times, nine of those wretched prisoners are driven to kennel together in a hovel fit only to stable a pair of horses, while many unoccupied apartments are locked up from use. Even a sufficiency of the common element of water is refused to their necessities, an advantage which the felons in Newgate enjoy. Public or private benefactions are dissipated or disposed of at the pleasure of the keepers, regardless of the intention or order of the donors. And the apartments, appointed to these miserable men, are generally damp, or shattered in the flooring, and exposed, by breach or want of windows, to the inclemency of night-air, and all the rigour of the seasons.

But what avail their complaints, if the legislator have not authorised, or made it the duty of some especial magistrates to examine into and redress these crying abuses?

But, tell me, continued Mr Fenton, were there any prisoners of consideration among the confined debtors? A few, Sir, of note, and many who had been well to pass in the world. Among these indeed, it was, that every scene and species of misery was displayed. There you might see, as you have said, numerous families

of wretches, whose thin and tattered garments but ill defended their shivering bodies from the inclemency of the elements, that blew through shattered windows, or came pouring from unslatched roofs.

These people fared incomparably worse than those of the vulgar herd; for being ashamed to beg at the gates, they had nothing to subsist on, save their scanty portions of such charities as happened to be sent in from time to time, and this scarcely supplied them with a sufficiency of water, black-bread, and offal; while the recollection of their former affluence added sharp and bitter poignancy to the sense of their present wants.——But here comes my pupil; he will be more particular, on scenes with which his heart was so meltingly affected.

Harry then entered, with Mrs Clement caressing him on the one side, and his old dependent Ned hanging about him on the other.

As soon as Clement and his Arabella had embraced, and all were settled and seated, Well, Harry, said Mr Fenton, will you favour us with some account of your expedition? Have you ever a pretty story for me, my Harry? Several stories, Sir, said Harry, that were sweet pretty stories when I heard them; but Mr

Clement had better tell them ; they would be sadly bungled if they came through my hands, dada. The company will make allowances, replied Mr Fenton ; let us have these stories in your own way, Harry, just as your memory may happen to serve you.

On the second day, dada, as my tutor and I were walking in the court-yard of the Fleet-prison, whom should I spy but my old master, Mr Vindex, walking, very sad, to and again by the wall. He was so pale and shabby, and so fallen away, that I did not rightly know him, till I looked at him very earnestly. My heart then began to soften and warm toward the poor man, for it told me, that something very sorrowful must have happened, before he could have been brought to that condition. So I went up to him, with a face, I believe, as melancholy as his own.

How do you do, good Mr Vindex ? said I. I should be glad to see you, if I did not see you look so sad. He then stared at me for some time, and at length remembering me, he looked concerned, and turned away to shun me ; but I took him lovingly by the hand, and said, You must not leave me Mr Vindex ; won't you know your old scholar, Harry Fenton ? Yes, says

he, casting down his mournful eyes, I know you now, master; I know I used you basely, and I know why you are come; but, reproach me, and insult me, as much as you please, all is welcome now, since I cannot lie lower, till I am laid in the earth.

I do not mean to insult you; this tear will witness for me, that I do not mean to insult you, my dear Mr Vindex; and so I wiped my eye. Here are twenty guineas, to put warm cloaths upon you in this cold weather. Little and low as I am myself, I will try to do something better for you; and so give me one kiss in token that we are friends.

The poor dear man then opened his broad eyes, in a wild stare upon me, with a look that was made up, half of joy, and half of shame. He then kneeled down, as I supposed, that I might reach to kiss him, and taking me into his arms, You are not born of woman, you are an angel, an angel! he cried; and so he fell a crying, and cried so sadly, that I could not for my heart but keep him company.

I did all I could to pacify and make him cheerful, and getting him up at last, You must not part with me Mr Vindex, said I, we must dine and spend the day together.

Here is Mr Clement, my tutor ; you and he too must be friends.

I then led him, by the hand, into a large ground-room, that Mr Close, the chief keeper, had appointed for us ; and I ordered dinner to be hastened and brought up. As soon as we were all seated, I began to laugh and joke, after my foolish way, in order to make poor Mr Vindex merry. When I found that it would not do, Mr Vindex, said I, be so kind to let me know what the money may come to for which you are confined ? A terrible sum, indeed, my darling, said he, no less than a hundred and fifty-two pounds. I then put my hand in my pocket, and, taking out two bills and a little matter of money that made up the sum, I put it into his hand, saying, My friend shall never lie in goal for such a trifle as this.

Having looked for some time at the bills with amazement, he turned to my tutor with a doubtful and shamed face ; Is this young gentleman, Sir, said he, duly authorized to dispose of such vast matters as these ? He is, said Mr Clement ; he is the carver and disposer of his father's fortune at pleasure ; and I am confident that his father will think himself doubly paid, in the use that his noble son has made of his privilege this day.

A gleam then, like that of sunshine, broke through his sad countenance, as through the clouds of a dark day : And are you the one, he cried, are you the one, master Harry, whom I treated so barbarously ? You may forgive me, my little cherubim ; you, indeed, may forgive me ; but I never, never shall forgive myself. O, Mr Vindex, said I, I would very nearly undergo the same whipping again, to do you twice the kindness, and make you love me twice as much as you now love me.

Dinner was now served, and, calling for wine, I filled him a bumper, in a large glass, which he drank to the health of my glorious dada, as he called you, Sir. Upon this, we grew very merry and friendly, among one another ; and when dinner was over, I begged him to tell me how he came to be put into confinement.

O, Master Harry, he cried, I have suffered all that I have suffered, very justly, very justly, for my harsh and cruel usage of you, Master Harry.

After the affair of the hobgoblins, as you know, the shame to which I was put by my fright and by my scourging, began to be whispered, and then to be noised about the town. The boys, at length,

caught the rumour, and began to hoot at me; and the more I chastised them, the more they gathered about me, and shouted after me, A rod for the flogger, a rod for the flogger.

No disease is so deadly, no blasting so baneful, as contempt to a man in the way of his profession. My boys grew disorderly, and behaved themselves, in school, without respect to my person, or regard to my government. Even my intimates shunned me, and would cast at me a side glance of smiling scorn as they passed. My school then melted from me like snow in a fog. Even my boarders forsook me. I stood at a high rent; my effects were seized by the landlord. It was in vain that I solicited payment from the parents of my scholars. No one who was indebted to me would give me a penny; while all that I owed came like a tumbling house upon me; and so I was cast into this prison, from whence your bounty has set me free.

My poor broken-hearted wife would have accompanied me to goal; but, as I had not wherewithal to give her a morsel of bread, I sent her to an old aunt, who had the humanity to take her in.

Alas, alas, poor Mr Vindex, said I, had I guessed any part of the mischiefs that

our unlucky pranks have brought upon you, I would have put both my hands into the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, rather than have had art or part in such a wickedness. For herein we acted the fable of the frogs and the boys; that which was play to us, was death to you, Mr Vindex.

In conscience, now we are indebted to you for every misfortune we caused you; and, as you are not yet paid for the half of your sufferings, I here give you my hand and word to make up a hundred and fifty pounds more for you; and for this I will not accept the smallest thanks, as I think it is no more than an act of common honesty. And I, cried Mr Fenton, I hold myself indebted to you a thousand pounds, my noble Harry, for that single sentiment. That's well, that's well, dada, cried Harry, (leaping up and clapping his hands) I shall now be clear in the world with all my poor creditors!

Thus, dada, continued he, it rejoiced my heart greatly, to send poor Mr Vindex away in such triumph; while my tutor and I went two or three doors off, to see a mighty pretty young creature, who was said to be confined with her ancient father. And I will tell you their story, with two or three other stories

more, on account of the incidents that happened while we were there, than of any thing else that was wonderful or uncommon in them.

On tapping at the door, we were desired to walk in, and saw a female, with her back to us, weaving bone-lace on a cushion; while an elderly man, with spectacles on, read to her in *Thomas a Kempis*. They both rose to salute us. Mr Clement then stepped up, and seeing what they were about, cried, God cannot but prosper your work, good people, since you employ your time to this purpose, both on earth and in heaven. As an earnest of his kindness to you, he sends you by us a considerable charity, which you shall receive as soon as you inform us who and what you are, and how you came here. Blessed be the messengers of my God, cried out the father, whether they come with happy or with heavy tidings! I say, with old Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."

O dada, I was quite charmed, when the daughter turned to me. There was such a sweetness, such a heavenly harmlessness in her face, that I could have kissed her, and kissed her again and again.

As I had brought a glass and the remainder of our bottle with me, we all

got about a board that was half stool and half table, and, after a round or two, the good man began his story :

My father's name was Samuel Stern. He had a clear estate of nine hundred and fifty pounds a-year in Suffex, and had, by my mother, three daughters and four sons, of whom I was the second.

My father, unhappily, was a loyalist, and when the troubles broke out between King Charles and the parliament, he took up all the money he could, at any interest, and raised a company at his own cost, which he headed on the part of his royal master.

After some successful skirmishes, his head was split in two by the broad sword of a trooper, at the battle of Naishby. Immediately all our servants forsook us, each carrying away with him whatever came to hand ; and, quickly after, the soldiers of the commonwealth came, carried off all the cattle, and left nothing of our house, except the bare walls.

In the mean time, we, poor children, huddled together into the garden, and, there separating, ran and crept under bushes and hedges, as so many chickens endeavouring to gain shelter from the kite.

As soon as the noise of the tumult was over, we rose and looked about fearfully; and, getting together again, we helped one another through the garden hedge, and made, as fast as we could, to the cottage of a neighbouring farmer, who had been our father's tenant. Here we were received coldly, and fared but very hardly for that night. On the next day, however, in order to get quit of us, as I suppose, the man went among our relations, and prevailed on one to take a son, and on another to take a daughter, till we were all divided among them; and so we entered on a kind of service, to our kindred; a service, as I believe, that is found, on experience, to be much harder and more insulting than any service to a stranger.

I forgot to tell you, gentlemen, that our mother deceased before our father engaged in arms, insomuch that we became orphans in all respects. I fell to the share of an uncle by my mother's side. He had a small estate of about a hundred and twenty pounds yearly income, with one son, and a daughter whom I thought very lovely.

My uncle appointed me overseer of his labours, as also his occasional clerk, for casting accounts, and inditing his letters &c. but, when it was intimated to him

that there was a secret liking between his daughter and me, he called me aside, and, taking up a book of profane poems, he kissed it, and swore, by the contents thereof, that, if ever I married his daughter, he would not give us a groat.

If you ever knew what love was, said he to Mr Clement, you must know that it breaks over stronger fences than these. In short, we were wedded and turned out of the house, without any thing to live upon, except about the value of twenty pounds, in small matters, which had been given to my wife, from time to time, by Lady Goodly, her godmother.

We made the best of our way to London. My wife understood needle-work, and, as I knew that my father-in-law was quite irreconcilable, I joined myself to a house-painter, to whom I gave my time for nothing, on condition of his giving me a sight into his business.

In the third year, my dear wife brought this poor creature into the world; but, happily, she did not encumber mankind with any more of our wretched and depending progeny.

All our care and delight was fixed on this our little daughter, and we thought nothing of any pains or labour that

might serve to introduce her, like herself, into the world.

As soon as Charles the II. had ascended the throne, our relations were fully assured that we should be restored to our ancient rights and possessions; and they contributed, as it were, for their own credit, to set us forth in a suitable manner for appearing at Court. There accordingly we attended, from time to time, for the space of twelve months, and got a number of woful memorials presented to his Majesty; but his Majesty was so deeply engaged in his pleasures, or so fearful of offending the enemies of his house, that he gave no attention to our wrongs. There may be also something in the breasts of the great that excites them to acts of bounty, rather than acts of justice; for these, as they apprehend, might be accepted as matter of debt, and not as matter of favour.

Being tired of a fruitless suit, I returned to my former employment, and, by industry and frugality, I lived with my little family quite happy and contented.

About ten months ago, two men came to our lodgings. The one was in a rich livery, and, having inquired for my daughter, presented her with a note to this effect,—“ Lady Diana Templar sends Di-

“ ana Stern the inclosed bill of twenty-five pounds, in order to put her into some little way of livelihood.”——As my poor dear child had no cause to suspect any fraud or evil intention in the case, she desired the men to return her most humble thanks and duty to her ladyship, and away they went.

As this lady was a distant relation of my wife’s father, my daughter, in a few days, dressed herself in her best, and went to return thanks to her ladyship in person, but was told that she was gone to her seat in the country.

In the mean time she laid out her supposed bounty in furnishing a little frontshop with some millenary wares, and was already beginning to get some custom, when, one evening, two bailiffs entered, laid an action upon her, and, taking her up in their arms, hurried her into a coach that drove up to the door.

My wife and I had rushed out, on hearing our child shriek; and seeing a coach set off with her at a great rate, we ran after as fast as we could, shouting and screaming, and crying, Stop the coach, stop the coach, a rape, rape! At length a bold fellow, who was passing, caught one of the horses by the bridle, and, while the coachman lashed at him, he

might serve to introduce her, like herself, into the world.

As soon as Charles the II. had ascended the throne, our relations were fully assured that we should be restored to our ancient rights and possessions; and they contributed, as it were, for their own credit, to set us forth in a suitable manner for appearing at Court. There accordingly we attended, from time to time, for the space of twelve months, and got a number of woful memorials presented to his Majesty; but his Majesty was so deeply engaged in his pleasures, or so fearful of offending the enemies of his house, that he gave no attention to our wrongs. There may be also something in the breasts of the great that excites them to acts of bounty, rather than acts of justice; for these, as they apprehend, might be accepted as matter of debt, and not as matter of favour.

Being tired of a fruitless suit, I returned to my former employment, and, by industry and frugality, I lived with my little family quite happy and contented.

About ten months ago, two men came to our lodgings. The one was in a rich livery, and, having inquired for my daughter, presented her with a note to this effect,—“Lady Diana Templar sends Di-

“ ana Stern the inclosed bill of twenty-
“ five pounds, in order to put her into
“ some little way of livelihood.”——As
my poor dear child had no cause to sus-
pect any fraud or evil intention in the
case, she desired the men to return her
most humble thanks and duty to her la-
dyship, and away they went.

As this lady was a distant relation of
my wife’s father, my daughter, in a few
days, dressed herself in her best, and went
to return thanks to her ladyship in per-
son, but was told that she was gone to
her seat in the country.

In the mean time she laid out her sup-
posed bounty in furnishing a little front-
shop with some millenary wares, and
was already beginning to get some cus-
tom, when, one evening, two bailiffs en-
tered, laid an action upon her, and, tak-
ing her up in their arms, hurried her in-
to a coach that drove up to the door.

My wife and I had rushed out, on hear-
ing our child shriek; and seeing a coach
set off with her at a great rate, we ran
after as fast as we could, shouting and
screaming, and crying, Stop the coach,
stop the coach, a rape, rape! At length
a bold fellow, who was passing, caught
one of the horses by the bridle, and,
while the coachman lashed at him, he

took out his knife and cut the reins in two. A mob then began to gather; whereupon a well dressed-man, who was in the coach, leaped out and made his escape; but the coachman was not so lucky; the people pulled him from the box, and having beaten and kicked him, they dragged him through the kennel.

Meanwhile we got our child out, and then the mob overturned the coach, and, jumping upon it, broke and dashed it all to pieces. We then thought that we had nothing further to apprehend, and, taking our child between us, we turned back and walked homeward; but, alas, we were not permitted to enter; the two bailiffs met us, and producing their writ, again arrested our daughter at the suit, as they said, of Jonathan Delvil, Esq; for the sum of twenty-five pounds, which he had lent her on such a day. So they conducted her here, while my wife and I accompanied her, weeping and sobbing all the way.

I then took these poor apartments to cover us from the weather, and, as my wife grew suddenly sick and faint, I hastened back to our lodgings, and had our bedding brought hither.

It was now evident that the pretended gift of Lady Templar was no other than a diabolical scheme of the villain Delvil, to

get the person of my darling within his fangs ; and I cursed my own stupidity for not perceiving it at first ; but blessed be my God however, in all events, that my lamb was still innocent, was still unsullied.

What with grief and the fright together, my dear wife took to her bed, from whence she never rose, but expired on the fifth day, blessing and pressing her daughter to her bosom. My poor infant then fell as dead beside her mother, and could not be recovered from her fit in many hours ; and, indeed, it was then the wish and the prayer of my soul, that we might all be laid and forgotten in one grave together.

As soon as my darling was recovered, however, I again wished to live for her sake, that I might not leave her without a comforter or protector, in the midst of a merciless and wicked world.

In order to pay the nurse-keeper, the doctor, and apothecary, as also to defray the funeral expences, I left my child with the nurse-keeper, and, going to our former lodgings, I sold all her millenary matters at something under a third of prime cost ; and having discharged the lodgings and paid my goal debts, I prepared to lay my precious deposit in the womb of

that earth which is one day to render her back, incorruptible, to eternity.

When the corpse was carrying out at the door, my child fell once more into fits, and I was divided and quite distracted about what I should do, whether to stay with the living, or pay my duty to the dead. But I will no longer detain you with melancholy matters, since all worldly griefs, with all worldly joys also, must shortly be done away.

As soon as I understood that Lady Templar was returned to town, I waited upon her, and giving her an abridgment of our manifold misfortunes, I produced the note that had been written in her name; but she coldly replied, that it was not her hand, and that she was not answerable for the frauds or villanies of others.

Meanwhile, my dear girl accused herself as the cause of all our calamities, and pined away, on that account, as pale as the sheets she lay in. She was also so enfeebled, by her faintish and sick fits, that she was not able to make a third of her usual earnings; and as I, on my part, was also disqualified from labouring in my profession, since I did not dare to leave my child alone and unsheltered, we were reduced to a state of the greatest extremity.

One day, word was brought me that a gentleman, a few doors off, desired to speak with me; and as they, who are sinking, catch at any thing for their support, my heart fluttered in the hope of some happy reverse. Accordingly I followed the messenger. His appearance, in dress and person, was altogether that of the gentleman.

He ordered all others out of the room, and requesting me to sit beside him, in a half-whispering voice he began: I am come, Mr Stern, from one whom you have great reason to account your greatest enemy; I come from Mr Delvil, at whose suit your daughter now lies in prison. I started—Be patient, Sir, he said. He knows your distresses, he knows all your wants, he knows also that he is the author of them; yet I tell you, that he feels them, as if they were his own; and that it was not his enmity, but his love, that occasioned them.

He depends on his old uncle Dimmock for a vast fortune in expectation. He saw your daughter, and loved her; he saw her again, and loved her to madness. He inquired her family, her character, and found that he had nothing to expect from any licentious proposal. He feared, however, that all must love her, as he did,

and, to prevent other pirates, he made use of the stratagem which, contrary to his intentions, has brought you here. He never meant any thing dishonourable by your daughter. Had he carried her clear off, you might all have been happy together at this day ; and, if you consent he will marry her here, in the presence of a few witnesses, who shall be sworn to secrecy till his uncle's death ; and he will instantly pay you down three hundred pounds, in recompence for your sufferings, and will settle one hundred pounds annuity on your child for life.

I must own that, to one in my circumstances, this proposal had something very tempting in it. But who is this Mr Devil ? said I, I know him not, I never saw him—I am the man, Sir, said he. I would have discharged my action as I came to this place ; but I dare not permit your daughter to get out of my custody ; for, at the loss of my fortune, at the loss of my life, I am determined that no other man living shall possess her. I then promised him that I would make a faithful narration to my child of all that had passed, but told him, at the same time, that I would wholly subscribe to her pleasure ; and so we parted.

As soon as I represented this matter to my Diana, O no, my papa, she cried, it is impossible, it never can be ; I would do any thing, suffer any thing, but this, for your relief. Would you act the marriage of the lamb and the wolf in the fable ? If such have been the consequences of this gentleman's affection for us, what have we not to expect from the effects of his aversion ? I could prefer any kind of death to a life with such a man. And then my mother, she cried, and burst into tears, my dear mother, whom he has murdered ! though he were worth half the world, and would marry me publicly in the face of the other half ; it will not be, it cannot be, indeed, my papa !

Hereupon I writ Mr Delvil almost a literal account of my daughter's answer. It is nearly five weeks since this happened, and we have not heard any thing further from him.

In this time, however, we got acquainted with a family at the next door, whose converse has been a great consolation to us. There is a father and mother, with seven small children, boys and girls ; they are very worthy people, and of noble descent ; but how they contrive to live at all I cannot conceive, for they have no visible means of making a penny. Had

we not known them, we should have thought ourselves the poorest of all creatures. We must own them more deserving of your charity, than we are.

Here poor Mr Stern ended; and you can't think, dada, how my heart leapt with love toward him, on his recommending others as more deserving than himself. So I resolved at once, what to do, and taking two 50/. notes from my pocket-book, You shall not be under the necessity, Mr Stern, says I, of marrying your pretty lamb here to the ugly wolf; so here is fifty pounds to pay your action, and fees, and other small debts.

On taking the note, dada, he looked at it very earnestly; and when he saw it was a true note, he opened his eyes and his mouth so wide, and stood so stiff, without stirring hand or foot, that he put me in mind of Lot's wife who was turned into a pillar of salt. However, I did not seem to mind him, but turning to his daughter, and shewing her the other note, Miss Diana, says I, here is fifty pounds for you also, in order to set you up in your little shop again; but you shall not have it without a certain condition. What condition, master, said she smiling? The condition, says I, of putting your arms about my neck, and giving me one or two sweet

kisses. She then looked earnestly at me, with eyes swimming with pleasure; and starting suddenly to me, and catching me to her bosom, she kissed my lips and my forehead, and my head, again and again; and then set up as lamentable and loud a cry, as if her father had lain a corpse before her.

Mr Stern then lifted up his eyes, and dropping on his knees, O my God, he cried, how bountiful art thou to a wretch who is not worthy the least of all thy mercies! Hereupon the daughter turned, and seeing the posture of her father, she fell on her knees before him, and throwing her arms about him, he folded her in his also, and they wept plentifully upon each other.

How comes it, dada, that crying should be so catching? However it be, Mr Clement and I could not contain; and I shall love him the better during life, for the tears that he shed on that occasion.

On hearing a smart rapping, Mr Stern rose and opened the door, where a footman, almost breathless, delivered him a letter. The letter was to the purpose that Mr Delvil was ill of a quinsy, that he had but a few hours to live, and requested Mr Stern to bring his daughter to him, that, by marriage, he might give her a lawful title to his fortune. No

papa, cried Diana, living or dead, nothing shall ever bribe me to give my hand to a man who has had a hand in the death of my dearest mother.

Mr Clement, however, thought it advisable that Mr Stern should attend the messenger, to see if Mr Delvil was really ill, or whether this might not be some new-contrived treachery.

This was a day of successes to poor Mr Stern. We had promised to stay with his Diana till his return; and he had not been long gone till some one tapped at the door. I opened it, and saw an exceedingly old and reverend man; he was dressed all in black, and his white head looked like snow on the feathers of the raven. Is Tom Stern here? said he. No, Sir, said I, he is gone into town. I thought he was a prisoner. No, Sir, it is not he, but his daughter, who is under confinement. Will you give a feeble old man leave to sit with you gentlemen? and so down he sat. Come here to me, child, says he to Diana, are you a daughter of Tom Stern? I am, Sir, so please you. And what was your mother's name? Ann Roche, Sir; but, alas! she is not living, I was the cause of her death; she broke her heart, good Sir, on my being put to goal. I hope, child, said the old gentleman, that you

were not imprisoned for any thing that was naughty. No, Sir, no, cried Mr Clement, it was her honesty alone that brought and kept her here; had she been less virtuous, she might have been at liberty, and flaunting about in her coach.

The old man then put on his spectacles, and ordering her to draw nearer, he took a hand in each of his, and looking intently in her face, What is your name, my dear? said he; Diana, honoured Sir. That is a pretty and chaste name, for an unchristian name. Indeed, Diana, you are a sweet babe, and the prettiest little prisoner that ever I saw. I will pay all your debts, and give you a thousand pounds over, if you will come along with me, and be my prisoner, Diana. Ah, Sir, cried the girl, it is too much to have broken the heart of one parent already; I would not leave my dear father for any man with all the money in the world. You do not leave your father, he cried, by going with me, Diana. I am your true father, the father of Nanny Roche, the father of her who bore you, your own grandfather, my Diana.

Here she sunk on her knees, between his knees, begging and beseeching his blessing; while his hands and eyes were fixed in prayer over her. He then raised

her, and placing her gently on his knee, clasped her in his aged arms ; while she threw her's about his neck, and joining her cheek to his, sobbed aloud, and poured her tears into his bosom. The old gentleman, however, did not express his concern by word, or sob, or even any change of his countenance ; and yet his tears fell fast down his reverend and delighted features, upon his grandchild.

This, dada, was a very pleasing, though a very affecting sight. As soon as the height of her passion was something abated, Miss Diana turned her eye toward me, and said, You were pleased, my grand-papa, to promise that you would pay my debts, but that is done already. This angel here was sent to prevent all others, and he further presented me with this bill of 50 l. to set me up in a better shop than I kept before.

I rejoice, cried the old man, I rejoice to find that so much of heaven is still left upon earth. But you, my Diana, are now in a condition, rather to give charity than receive it from any. Your dear uncle Jeremy, who traded to the West-Indies, lately died of the small-pox on his passage homeward. You are the heir of his fortunes, and the heir of my fortune ; you are the whole and sole lady of all our

possessions. But tell me, how much did this young gentleman advance in your favour? A hundred pounds, Sir.

He then took out a banker's note of a hundred pounds, and having offered it to me, I did not dare to refuse it, for fear of offending the honour of the respectable old gentleman; so I held it in my hand after a doubting manner. My dear Miss Diana, says I, I will not be put to the pain of taking this back again, but on the condition of your telling me to whom I shall give it? O, she cried out instantly, to the babies, to the sweet babies at the next door! I wish to heaven I had as much more to add to it for their sakes.

I then inquired the name of her favourite family at the next door, and being told that it was Ruth, I looked over my list, and found that Mr Ruth was in for above seven hundred pounds. This grieved me very much, as such a sum nearly amounted to the half of our whole stock. However, I comforted myself with the hope that God would send some one else to make up to this poor family what should be wanting on my part.

Mr Stern just then returned. I beg pardon, said he, gentlemen, for detaining you so long, but I could not avoid it. The unhappy man is actually dying a

very terrible death, indeed, in his full strength, and almost in his full health, stifling and gasping for air, which the swelling of his glands will not suffer to pass.

As soon as I entered, he beckoned to me, and put this paper, sealed, into my hand. And again, observing that I was agitated and deeply concerned for the state under which he laboured, he reached out his hand to me, and grasping my right hand, put this ring upon my finger.—This paper contains, under his hand and seal, a discharge of the action which he laid upon my daughter, as also a conveyance to us of the cash-notes inclosed, amounting to three hundred pounds, in consideration, as he recites, of our losses and unjust sufferings. And for my dear master Fenton, I here return you your 100*l.* with all possible acknowledgments, and a sense of the obligation that will never leave me, during life.

Sir, said I, you must excuse me, I am already paid. That gentleman, yonder, compelled me to accept of the very sum you offer.

Mr Stern then started, and, turning he saw his uncle ; and, eyeing him inquisitively, at length recollected who he was. He then stepped up, and falling on his

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 111

knees before him, O, Sir, he cried, your pardon, your pardon! 'Tis all I presume to ask, I dare not hope for your blessing.

Tom, said the old gentleman, I wanted to be even with you; I wanted to seduce your daughter, as you seduced mine. But your daughter, Tom, though come of very rebellious parents, would not be seduced. Howsomever, as I have taken a liking to her, she must come along with me, whether she will or no. And, as Jacob said to Joseph concerning Ephraim and Manasseh, she shall be mine and not thine, Tom; and my name and the name of my fathers shall be named upon her, according to her inheritance. But if you have any affection for this my child, Tom, and are unwilling to part with her, you may follow her, and welcome.

Soon after we got up, and having congratulated this happy family on the blessing of their meeting and reconciliation, I stepped to the old gentleman, and catching him about the neck, tenderly took my leave of him, as I did also of Mr Stern. But when I went to take leave of the fair Diana, she drew some steps backward, and, her eyes and sweet features beginning to swell, she again run forward, and catching me in her dear arms, O, my darling, my darling, my darling, she cried, am I

then going to lose you, it may be never to see you more! were it but once in a week, in a month, in a year, to behold you, even that would keep me alive for all the remainder. O my best, my most generous, my first preserver! it is you who might be the seducer, who might make me and others run after you bare-foot. But if we must part, my little angel, do but promise to know me in heaven, and there your poor Diana will meet you, never to part any more.

What could I say or do, dada, in answer to the dear girl? my heart swelled, almost to bursting, while she caressed and wept over me. At length, with words, as well as my tears would give me leave to pronounce them, I demanded the name of the place to which she was going, and promised to pay her a visit as soon as possibly I could. We then parted very melancholy, notwithstanding all our success; and going out, I wiped my eyes, and begged Mr Clement to order tea and coffee, with a comfortable entertainment, for the family at the next door, while I should go in and introduce myself as well as I could.

Having tapped gently at the door, it was opened by a little ragged boy of about five years old. Mrs Ruth sat full in my

view, and her three little daughters stood before her, while she examined them in the Old-Testament questions of who was the first man, and the wisest man, and the strongest man, and the oldest man, and, above all, the man after God's own heart?

Mrs Ruth was a fine woman, and had a great deal of humble dignity about her. I bowed to her as I entered, and going familiarly up, I took her by the hand and kissed it. Allow me, Madam, said I, to introduce a little neighbour to you: I lodge within a few doors, and shall think myself happy in being acquainted in your family. Alas, my dear, says she, there are very few who seek acquaintance with calamity. They, who wish to relieve it, seek acquaintance with it, Madam.

Having eyed me all over, with an earnest kind of surprise, You look, my love, said she, to be very good natured, and I dare say will be very charitable when you come to have the ability. The little ability I have, Madam, shall be strained for your service. In the mean time, pray pardon the freedom I have taken in ordering tea and coffee into your room, with some cakes and sweet-meats for these pretty misses. I will only trouble you, Madam, with one guest more; it is Mr Clement,

my tutor, who, good man, has been no stranger to poverty or distress.

Here she called Mr Ruth from an inner-room, Give me leave, my dear, says she, to introduce a young stranger to you: from what world he comes, I know not; but I am sure that he is not wholly of the world that we have lived in.

Mr Ruth's countenance spoke at once the meekness of Moses and the patience of Job. Having saluted, we both sat down. Mr Ruth, said I, I have a message to you and your lady from your sweet pretty neighbour, Miss Diana Stern. In token of her respect and affection for you, she presents you with this cash-note of a hundred pounds. Diana Stern! cried out Mr Ruth, why, master, she is nearly as poor as ourselves. By no means, Sir, I assure you; her grandfather is come to town, she is worth several thousands, besides a considerable estate to which she is heiress. O, the dear creature, the dear angel! cried Mrs Ruth, I will instantly go and pay her my acknowledgements; so up she got, and out she ran, before I could prevent her.

As soon as she was gone, Mr Ruth, says I, my dada is much fonder of me than I deserve. He has given me a little money to dispose of, at pleasure, among

the confined debtors; and though I may not have enough to answer your occasions, yet my dada is so very good, and so very generous, that if you give me the sum of your debts, with the story of your distresses, his heart, I am sure, will melt, and he will set you clear in the world.

He made no answer, however, to this my offer, but, lifting up his eyes, he cried, Well mightest thou say, great Saviour of the simple, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." O, thou babe of the manger, thou first-born of many brethren! here, indeed, is a dear and true little brother of thine? but he speaks in his simplicity, and not according to knowledge! Then, turning toward me, Can you guess, my darling, said he, what you undertake to do for me? I question if the charities of all this nation would be sufficient, when united, to effect my deliverance. Nothing, nothing but the arm of the Almighty can do it. He will do it, indeed, in death; but what then shall become of my wife and seven infants? that truly is terrible, is worse than death to think of?

While we were speaking, two sweet little fellows came in, the eldest very nearly of my size, but both clad in very thin and poor-looking apparel. Having

kneeled for their father's blessing, they slipped behind us; and, turning my head to observe them, I was quite ashamed, and drew it back again, on perceiving that the poor things were unlading their pockets of old crusts and broken meats, which I supposed they had begged for the family.

Mrs Ruth just then returned, and her countenance looked something dejected. She took her seat by her husband, and, continuing a while silent, she put her handkerchief before her eyes, and began in broken words, Can you guess, my dear, said she, what sort of a creature this is whom we have got among us? 'This little heavenly impostor, to lighten our obligation, would have persuaded us that the hundred pounds was the gift of another; but it is all his own bounty, it is all his own graciousness. Come, my daughters, come, my children, kneel down and return your thanks to this your patron, your benefactor, your little father here!

O dada, you would have pitied me sadly, had you seen me at this time. The poor dear things came, all in a cluster, pressing, and catching, and clasping, and clinging about me; while my love, and my very heart was torn, as it were, to ritters among them. So I took them,

one by one, in my arms, and kissed and embraced them very cordially, calling them my brothers and sisters. I then took out another hundred pound note, and giving it to the eldest of the daughters, Here, my dear, said I, I always loved the little misses better than the little masters; here is for yourself and your sisters, to cloathe you in a way more becoming your family. And then taking a note of equal value, I gave it to the eldest son, for himself and his brothers, as I said, to help to educate them in a manner more agreeable to the house from whence they came.

Mr and Mrs Ruth looked so astonished at me, and at each other, that, for a while, they were not able to utter a syllable; and, just as they began to make their acknowledgements, I cried, Hush, hush! here comes my tutor.

Mr Clement just then entered, followed by several servants, who carried a tea equipage, cold fowl, baked meats, with pastries, and some wine.

Having introduced Mr Clement, we all got round the table, and, after tea and a further regale, I besought Mr Ruth to give us the story of his misfortunes.

My father, said he, was baron of Frankford. He left my brother, with the

title, four thousand five hundred pounds a-year, entailed however upon me, in case of his dying without male issue. And he left me a small inheritance of four hundred pounds yearly, to support in some measure the appearance of a gentleman.

As my concern bordered on my brother's estate, we saw one another every day, and continued, for several years, in fraternal and tender amity.

Being both invited, one day, to dine with other company at the house of a neighbour called Mr Heartless, a question happened to be started over the bottle, whether the method of setting an egg on end was originally the invention of Columbus, or whether it was communicated to him by some other ! and I unhappily espoused the opinion that was opposite to that of my brother.

Now, though the question was not worth the very shell of the egg about which we debated, yet we entered as warmly into it as though a province had lain at stake : for it is not truth, or instruction that disputants seek after ; it is victory alone, that is the object of their contention.

After some warm words and personal retorts had passed between my brother and me, he, starting into sudden passion,

gave me the lie ; whereupon, reaching across the table, I gave him a tap on the cheek with the flat of my fingers : then rising furiously from his seat, he swore a fearful oath, and cried, I will ruin you, Harry ; though it cost me my estate, I will ruin you, Harry Ruth, with all who are yours.

The very next day he mustered his tenants and labourers, and coming upon me with a little army, he laid most of my fences level with the earth.

When I complained of this violence to my next neighbours, Mr Heartless and Mr Hollow, they protested they would stand by me against such outrageous proceedings to the last of their fortunes. They then advanced me, between them, five hundred pounds for the purpose. I immediately commenced suit against my lord's tenants. But though I cast them all, with costs, I unhappily found that nearly all my money was sunk in the contest.

Meantime, scarce a day passed wherein I was not served with a subpoena from Chancery to answer such or such a bill, to which my brother had procured me to be made a party. And he also entered a suit against me himself, in order to inva-

validate my father's will, whereby I claimed my little patrimony.

When I told this to my friend Mr Hollow, he broke into a loud laugh: Your title! cried he; the world cannot invalidate your title, Mr Ruth; I will let you have a thousand pounds upon it to-morrow; and this I was under the necessity of accepting soon after.

Contention serves, with mutual hands, to shut every door against reconciliation. The more I had loved my brother, the more I now detested him. Instead of any submission or overture to appease him, my lips uttered, in daily invectives, the overflowings of my heart; as I also was assured that on his part he wished me nothing less than eternal perdition. Thus we burned on both sides, with unquenchable fire, and the kingdom of Satan was fully opened within us.

At length my body was imprisoned, at the suit of my neighbour Heartless, for 750*l.* and my lands were taken under execution, at the suit of my neighbour Hollow, for the sum of 2000*l.* But I soon was informed that all this money was my brother's, who had advanced it, from time to time, to those his clandestine correspondents, in order to hasten and deepen my destruction. When I understood this,

I raged, I was all on fire ; and I took a horrid pleasure in the notion of having the fangs of a tyger, that I might tear my brother piecemeal, and my false friends limb from limb, and feast my spirit on their pangs, and mine eyes on their carnage.

But when I turned a look on my wife and seven infants, grief joined with rage to tear me by a double distraction. I cursed the lot to which I was appointed upon earth ; and I should have sought some desperate means of putting an end to my torments and existence together, but that I dreaded, by my death, to give pleasure to my brother, ten times more than I dreaded the pain of death itself.

O, my friends, had all that ever were fainted, come and preached to me, the peace of our Lord Christ, at that season, it would have been no more than beating the air, or striving with so many sponges to make an impression on a block of marble. It is distress alone that, by oppression, makes impression ; that preaches the internal doctrine of sensible mortification, and humbles a proud spirit, by plucking away all its props.

At first, I was as a worm under the foot of my God. I turned, and struggled, and writhed, and fought with all my

force against the crusher. But, alas ! all was in vain ; he was too mighty for me ; and opposition served only to add to my anguish.

At length I was compelled to acquiesce rather through the want of power than the want of will to resist. And I lay, as it were, without motion, under his dispensations ; at the same time that my heart reproached him, in secret.

Having sold all our moveables, and even our wearing apparel for sustenance, we were reduced to the necessity of sending our eldest boys to beg fragments of victuals at kitchen-windows, to keep us from utterly famishing. This I held to be such a further shame and disgrace as stung my soul to the quick : I therefore began to kick against these pricks also ; but finding that, the more I spurned, the stronger I was held and pressed into the dust, I gave up all resistance, and contented myself with grieving and weeping under the hand of the Almighty.

From hence I gradually sunk into a state of resigned serenity, which, although without sunshine, was yet without disturbance. My fury smoothed its crest, my passions subsided, and I felt nothing more of rancour against my brother, or resistance against my God.

The activity of the soul will find itself employment. As I had now no further prospect or concern upon earth, I began to turn my thoughts and attention toward heaven. I locked myself into yonder closet. I threw myself into the dust. I have sinned, I cried, I have greatly sinned, O God! I am nothing, I am crushed even lower than the nothing that I am; spare, spare me from a deeper perdition, I beseech thee!

I felt that my prayer was heard: peace descended upon me like dew upon the night; the day-star began gradually to dawn to my soul; the dark kingdom of Satan gave way before the kingdom of the Son of Light and Love; and I would no more have entertained any one of my former passions, than I would have taken burning coals and have buttoned them up in my bosom.

I was greatly delighted, dada, with this part and some more of Mr Ruth's story; and I got him to repeat it over and over, that I might remember it the better.

I now, continued he, I now pitied my brother, as much as ever I had hated him. I grieved for having caused the loss of his peace. I wished to restore it to him. I wrote a penitential acknowledgment of my faults. I besought his pardon, in the

humblest manner, for the unfortunate blow. I subscribed to the justice of my consequent sufferings; and I sent my son, here, to attend his lordship with my lowly address.

The triumph, which this humiliation gave to my brother, supplied him with patience to go through my memorial. But then conceiving, as I supposed, that it was dictated by mercenary meannesses and hypocrisy, he tore it to pieces and dashed it into the fire. Then, returning to my child the box which had so inflamed the soul of his lordship, he kicked my poor little fellow out of his house.

My child came home to me, weeping sadly; but I consoled him the best I could, and mingled my tears with his; not in any resentment for the treatment received, but through grief for the inveteracy of my unhappy brother. O my God, I cried, I no longer repine at my abasement, at the weight of my sufferings and mortifications; I bless thee for them, O God; they have proved my best friends, my most salutary physicians. Cruel and stern, indeed, as the porter who stands at the iron gate of pain; but O, it opens upon regions of inward delight; for he who clothed himself with the cross, is all glorious within!

My happy experience of this truth opened, for me, a new prospect into the mystery of God's dispensation to mortals; and threw a number of shining lights on those very articles of gospel-redemption, which had formerly appeared to me so exceptionable and gloomy. If God, said I to myself, hath suffered man to fall, he hath also provided for him every possible means of recovery and restoration.

Wherefore, when sin came into the world, God also sent suffering, its inseparable attendant, to be a cure and an antidote to the poison thereof. If sin, therefore, hath thrust the kingdom of heaven from within us, suffering comes, as God's forerunner; it relaxes and unfolds the brazen gates of our polluted temple, that Christ our Righteousness may enter, the very hem of whose garment is Salvation to every soul that lays hold upon it.

Here I took Mr Ruth about the neck, and kissing him, said, that I was sure my dada would be willing to pay his whole debt, in return for the sweet instructions which he had given to his Harry. You speak of your dada, my dear, said he, as though he were the representative of God in the gospel, who forgave to his servant ten thousand talents. What you have given me already, master, is beyond any

human bounty that ever I heard of. I shall therefore lay by two of these notes, till I am better informed how far your good father may be satisfied with the donation.

Soon after, we took leave, for the present, of this honourable family. We then went among the other principal debtors, whose distresses indeed were great, though their stories, except one, had little singular in them. In order to make our money go as far as we could, we hurried here and there, through the town, compounding with the several creditors, from eight to ten and twelve and fifteen shillings in the pound; so that for about six hundred pounds, we discharged a number who were indebted to the amount of a thousand.

On Tuesday about noon, in the last week, I stepped to Mr Ruth's, to see if the family had been decently clad, agreeable to my request. There I found him and his four sons clothed in warm and clean, though very coarse apparel: and he told me, that his wife had gone abroad with her three daughters, in order to put them also into a suitable condition.

While I sat with him, a young woman came in, of a very genteel appearance, though in a plain dress. Don't you re

member the girl, Sir, said she to Mr Ruth, who used to come to you, over night, in a green kerchief and a little red mantle? I should be very ungrateful, indeed, said he, if any change of dress could conceal from my remembrance that sweet and charitable countenance. O Sir, she cried, the few shillings that I brought you from time to time, came from a very affectionate hand, though from a hand you would little suspect of any affection toward you; they came from your loving niece Belinda Ruth, who has shed many a shower of tears on your misfortunes. May heaven be her portion, cried out the good man, since earth has nothing equal to so much goodness! Indeed, Sir, continued the girl, the little that your niece sent you was procured with much difficulty and danger to herself; for, from the time that, on her knees and with a deluge of tears, she petitioned her father in your behalf, he kept a watchful eye over her, and took from her all family-trusts; so that she had nothing wherewith to supply you, except the price of some cast-gowns, and of other little matters that she feigned to have lost. Moreover, my lord swore vehemently, that, if ever she furnished you with the value of a farthing, or kept any kind of corre-

spondence with you or with yours, he would disown and turn her into the public streets.

You alarm me greatly, cried out Mr Ruth. Is any thing amiss, has any thing happened to my dear child? She was a lovely little lamb, a little angel from her cradle; though I should not know her now if she stood erect before me. I hope, I say—tell me—proceed, I beseech you!

There was a servant, Sir, a man whom your niece thought very faithful, and therefore intrusted with the secret of my coming to you, that he might attend and see me safe back again. This fellow, presuming on the confidence that was placed in him, would, this morning, have taken indecent liberties with his young mistress. This she resented in a becoming manner, and threatened to complain of his insolence to her father. The revengeful villain instantly run, and told the affair to his Lord, with many aggravations, as though his daughter was robbing him of all his substance. Thereupon she was hastily called, and having in part confessed the charge, my Lord drew his sword in his fury, whereupon giving a shriek and a sudden spring, she got out of his presence, and has sent me to know, Sir, if you will be pleased to receive her?

Yes, cried Mr Ruth, to my bosom, to my heart, with the same pleasure and welcome that a convict receives pardon on the hour of execution.

Just then Mrs Ruth entered, with her three daughters, who running up to their father, dropped together on their knees before him for a blessing.

While his hands and eyes were raised in prayer over them, the young stranger stepped earnestly up, and falling on her knees beside the daughters, she broke into tears and cried aloud, Bless me, bless me also, O my father! I am your niece, your Belinda. My father is no more! Yours, my Lord, is the title, yours all the possession! I now, in my turn, depend on your bounty for a morsel of bread. My brother, my brother dead! exclaimed Mr Ruth. He is, my Lord, she replied; he was suffocated by his rising choler, and expired on the spot.

While the young Lady spoke, Mrs Ruth looked, as quite terrified by the tidings of such a sudden elevation; and clapping her hands together, and lifting her eyes, she cried, It cannot be, it is impossible! Ours the title, ours the fortune!—O my God!—O my husband!—O my children!—and down she dropped.

C H A P XVI.

WHILE Harry was speaking, Ned saw a woman standing before one of the windows; and looking earnestly at her, he gave a sudden jump, and, dancing about, cried, O Sir, Sir, my mammy, my mammy! there's my mammy, as sure as day!

Run, Ned, instantly, cried Mr Fenton, and call James to me. James, yonder's the woman who stole Ned from his parents; have an eye to her, do not let her escape! Order Frank to take a horse and go with all speed to Mr and Mrs Fielding, that they may come and know, of a surety, whether Ned is their child or not—Stay a moment; as soon as you have given Frank his orders, take the rest of the servants and lay hold on this bad woman; bring her into the house by force, and confine her in one of the back rooms till Mr Fielding arrives. By all Ned's account, she must be a very sad creature, and deserves no favour.

James went out with alacrity upon his commission; and having executed mat-

ters with his accustomed punctuality, he returned to the company.

O, Sir! cried James, it is impossible that this woman should be Ned's mammy, as he called her. This is some unhappy, decayed gentlewoman, as innocent of the fact, I dare answer, as the child unborn. I am sorry, with all my heart, that I had used her so roughly. Besides, Sir, she is so deaf, that she can't answer to any thing of which she may be accused.

When we took her in hand she was terribly frightened. Come, says I, mistress you must now give an account of all your wickedness.—Ennis, says she, Ennis? No but Enfield; five miles beyond Enfield, with the Rev. Mr Catharines.—I know nothing, said I aloud, of your Enfields or your Catharines, but I tell you, that you must now answer for the life that you have led.—Dead, dead, says she, God forbid! A dear and good master he was to me, I am sure. I have lived with him these five years; and he gave me money enough to bear my charges; but I fell sick at St Alban's, and spent all; and I have been these three days creeping along, and begging wherewithal to keep life in me on the way.

As you say, James, cried Mr Fenton, his account seems pretty feasible; a deaf

131 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

servant however is something uncommon. Go to her yourself, Ned, and observe her more exactly; for if what she says has any truth in it, it is impossible she should be your mammy.

Ned accordingly went, but returned under evident confusion and difficulty. I don't know what to think, Sir, of this matter, cries Ned. When I look at the gentlewoman's face, I could swear, twenty times over, to every feature; but when I look at her dress and manners, I could again almost swear against her face.

Ned's perplexity added greatly to Mr Fenton's curiosity. He got up in haste and went in person to inspect the party. When he entered, he saw a young woman who looked very pale and sickly, but of a genteel appearance, and neatly though plainly dressed. She cast upon him a sensible and penetrating look, and curtsying to him, with downcast eyes, Sir, said she, your presence tells me that you are master here. I know not for what offence your people have confined me; but if it is on any suspicion of misbehaviour, I have here the certificate of a worthy man and a great saint, who vouches at least for the innocence of my conduct.—Here she presented him with a paper that contained the following words:

" I certify, that the bearer hath served
 " me upward of five years, in quality of
 " housekeeper and intendant of my fa-
 " mily ; and that she is a young woman
 " of distinguished piety and merit, and
 " departs, at her own desire, on some bu-
 " siness to London. Given under my
 " hand, &c.

" MARMADUKE CATHARINES, Cl."

On reading this, Mr Fenton bowed, and made a motion with his hand for her to sit down. He then took a pen and paper that lay beside him, and wrote to the purpose, that he requested her to allow him to detain her certificate for about an hour; after which he would return it, and endeavour to make her amends for the unbecoming treatment which his people had given her.

On casting her eyes over the paper, she made a low curtsy, and said, I shall willingly attend, Sir, during your pleasure; but hope, in the mean time, that your charity will afford me a morsel or two of the fragments of your last meal.

Mr Fenton then pulled a bell, and having ordered some cold meats and white-wine to be served, he bowed, and withdrew to his company.

Ned, said he, as he entered, this woman is just as much the Empress of Russia as she is your mammy. Here, Mr Clement, look at this certificate; I have no reason to doubt the truth of the character given in it, for her person and manners are every way conformable. I am sorry at heart, that I sent in such a hurry for Mr and Mrs Fielding; I have thereby raised a sort of expectation in them, and it may be very mortifying to have that expectation so suddenly and so wholly defeat.

Some time after, a coach and six frothing horses drove up to the door, and Mr and Mrs Fielding alighted, with a kind of impatience and trepidation apparent in their countenance. As soon as Mr Fenton had duly received and seated them, My dear Madam, says he to Mrs Fielding, I think myself very unhappy in having given you a deal of unnecessary trouble. My poor Ned, here, has been utterly mistaken in the person of the woman whom he took to be his mammy. The certificate of her certain residence bears a date even previous to that in which we found him? and her deportment is more than a thousand testimonies against her being of the wandering or dissolute class of people. Be pleased, Mr Fielding, to look over this

certificate; I think it has all the marks of its being genuine.

The moment that Mr Fielding cast his eye on the paper, A well-known character, indeed! he exclaimed. It is the hand of Mr Catharines, my tutor, my friend; the man of the world, excepting yourself, Mr Fenton, for whom I have the dearest respect and affection. No question can be made of any thing to which he sets his affirmative.

Alas, cried Mrs Fielding, then all the hopes we had conceived must again be cast aside. Here comes our nurse too, poor woman, in great haste; I sent her word that we had found the person whom we suspected to have stolen our child, and desired that she would meet me here directly.

While Mrs Fielding spoke, nurse entered panting, and almost breathless; and without saluting or taking any notice of the company, Where, she hastily cried, where is the boy, Madam, whom you supposed to be your child?

Ah! nurse, said Mrs Fielding, we were quite mistaken in the woman whom we suspected to be the kidnapper, and so that affair is all over again.

I have nothing to say, cried nurse, to this woman or t'other woman; but you

must not have another body's child put upon you. If he is indeed your son, I shall know him in an instant; I should know him from all the children that ever were born. Why, nurse, cried Mrs Fielding, eagerly, do you know of any natural mark or mole, or spot, by which you could guess at him? He had no such spot upon him, Madam; but, if he be a living boy, he has a mark of my own making that never will out, and that's the reason that I never dared to tell you of it. What mark, nurse, what mark! tell me instantly, I beg you.

Why, Madam, you must know as how the weather was very cold, it being twelfth day in Christmas holidays. So you and my master were from home on visiting, and I had a rousing fire down, and my child stood by my knee, being just then twelve months nineteen days old, and as sturdy a fellow, of his age and inches, as any could desire to see. So the cat, all at once, threw down some crockery-ware behind me. Up I started, to be sure, and run to save the vessels; but hearing my child scream, I turned much nimbler back again, and found him fallen with his little neck against the upper bar of the grate. It was well that I did'nt die on the spot, for then he must have died too. So I whipt him up in my arms, but he shrieked and roar-

ed terribly. So I got some softening cream and spread it over the burn, and I put a plaister upon that again ; and I covered the place, from day to day, so well with his cap, that neither you nor my master knew any thing of the matter. But the shape of his hurt went so deep into my heart and into my memory, that, as I was saying, and still say, I should know him by it again among all the children in all the world.

Go then, my dear nurse, cried Mrs Fielding, go immediately, and examine if this boy has your mark upon him. Is this the master, Madam, whom you suspect to be your son ? It is, nurse, it is ; my heart took a liking to him the first moment I saw him ; he too was stolen from his parents, and may as well be my son as the son of another.

Here nurse made a hasty step or two toward Ned, but, suddenly stopping and turning pale, Ah ! Madam, she cried, I wish you would go and try yourself ; the wound, if he has it, is just under his right ear ; for if I should find, indeed, that he is my very child, I shall certainly run mad on the very spot for joy. I dare not try, nurse, I dare not try for the world, said Mrs Fielding ; I am already all of a tremble, I know not how.

Nurse, then, plucking up a little resolution, stepped suddenly to Ned, and turned up his hair; when, giving a loud scream, she had just the power to cry out, My child, my child, my child! and dropped down in an anguishing fit of hysterics.

Mrs Fielding, on hearing her nurse cry out, rose hastily from her chair, and would have gone to embrace her son, but, falling instantly back, she fainted away. The poor nurse, however, was not so happy. She broke forth, at times, into convulsive peals of laughter that made the house ring; and again she fell into fits of weeping, so outrageous and bitterly desolate, as no heart, under the temper of adamant, could support.

While the family were all in bustle, applying remedies to their patients. Mrs Fielding recovered, and, hearing the cries of her nurse, she went and kneeled down by her, and wept with her and over her, while her tears proved a seasonable restorative to herself.

As soon as Mr Fielding found that his lady was well recovered, he turned to Ned, and, lifting his hair, observed the remarkable seam that the burn had made. It is, it is my child! he tenderly cried. O my God, how is this? wherein have I deserved thy smallest notice or regard,

that thou shouldest thus visit me with thy wonders, and by thy mercies put me to confusion of face?

Here Ned kneeled respectfully down for a blessing, which his father silently called upon him with lifted hands and eyes. He then raised him, and sitting down, took him fondly to his bosom; Thou art, thou art my son, my beloved son, he cried; my first and my last, the only offspring of my bowels! Thou shalt no more be a wanderer, no more be a beggar, my babe. Thrice blessed be our meeting, and tenfold blessed thy future fortune! O that our lives, my child, might be made one whole oblation to Him from whom this amazing salvation hath come!

By this time, the nurse's distemper was greatly abated, though she still continued extremely low and feeble, and did not seem to recollect, except by faint glimmerings, any matter that had passed. Mr Fielding then proposed to take her to town, to the physicians; observing that there was room enough for her and Ned in their carriage; and as Mrs Fielding made no exception, the coach was ordered to turn directly to the door.

Poor Ned, during this time, was as a person, who fluctuated between the dread of leaving known and certain enjoyments,

and the hopes of possessing somewhat that he had not yet tasted.

Mr Fielding then stepped up, in a kind of quick rapture, to Mr Fenton. He caught him in his arms; My dearest Sir, he cried, I love, I respect, I revere you, even next to my God! What can I return you? what shall I say to you? All that I am, or have, sinks out of sight from your benefits.—I am blessed, my dear Sir, I am blessed beyond expression, replied Mr Fenton, in being made an humble instrument of happiness to a worthy man.—O Sir, cried Mr Fielding, what events next to miraculous! we came to your door, but we were not permitted to pass; our carriage broke for the purpose: you then told us of this foundling; but what likelihood that among millions he should happen to be ours? You then proposed an expedient for ascertaining the persons from whom he was kidnapped. This expedient failed. God, however, would discover him, and had foreordained the means. He set upon him an indubitable mark for the purpose; none knew of this but his nurse, and she has revealed it. Had any one of these many circumstances been wanting, our child must have continued a stranger to us forever. Indeed, Sir, said Mr Fenton, they are all concur-

ring proofs, that you are under the especial eye of Providence. But, Sir, I fear we shall have a heavy loss of our friend Ned: for, though he does not want his small faults, he is a worthy-hearted child, and a very pleasant companion. O, Sir, cried Mr Fielding, you and master Fenton have a right to command both him and us at all times. But come, Ned, take leave, for the present, of your best friends.

Here Ned, with filling eyes, stooped respectfully to Mr Fenton, and kneeling before him, took each of his hands, and kissed them, crying, My father! my father! whereupon Mr Fenton tenderly raised him, and pressing him affectionately to his bosom, cried, God be good to you, my son, and make you a blessing to your true parents and to all your kin!

Ned then turned to Harry, and taking him by both hands, and looking him fondly in the face, O master Harry, master Harry, he cried, I never shall be able to say the word farewell to you, my master Harry! I was hungry, and you fed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was a stranger and you took me in; the whole world to me was fatherless and friendless, when you were father and mother, and a whole world of friends to me, my true

lord and master, Harry ! Are you not my owner, am I not your property, your own hard bought bargain ? Did you not purchase me with your stripes, and with your precious blood, and will you suffer me to be taken away from you, my heart's master ?

Here Harry, swallowing his passion as well as he was able, clasped Ned in his arms, and cried, My brother, my brother, my friend and brother, for ever ! then turning to Mr and Mrs Fielding, and wiping his eyes, I hope, Madam, I hope, Sir, says he, that you will excuse my young friend here, for his partiality to a family who have loved him long and very dearly ; in a little time, to be sure, he will love and respect you both, above all the world, though put all together. Tho' I grieve to part with him, I heartily rejoice at his being found, and acknowledged to be the child of such worthy parents, and I hope, I say, that you will not be offended at his concern for parting with his old friends.

No, my noble creature, cried Mr Fielding, we are delighted at the proof that he gives of his gratitude, and at the strength of his attachment where he has been so highly obliged.

O Sir, O Madam, says Ned (kissing the hands of his parents) did you but know

the value of what I lose, when I leave—when I leave—and here he burst afresh into tears.

Mrs Fielding then took Ned in her arms, and tenderly embracing him, cried, We do, my love, we do know the value of the family that you leave; and it is the first and the dearest wish of my heart that we should all become as one family, and as one household. This angel here, as you say, is your rightful owner, and we owe him more, on that account, than our whole fortune can pay, and he shall have you as long and as often as ever he pleases; but, for this night, my darling, it would be very unkind not to go with your good nurse, your true and loving mammy, who has suffered so much for your sake; and her case requires that we should take her immediately to the doctor's.

Here Ned acquiesced; and, having taken a weeping leave of all the family, not forgetting the meanest servant in the house, he stepped slowly into the coach, sat down by his nurse, and away they drove.

As soon as the family of the Fieldings were gone, Harry withdrew to his chamber and locked himself in, while Mr Fenton went to enfranchise his late prisoner.

He first returned the certificate to her, and then presenting her with twenty guineas, he bowed and made a motion with his hand to the door, intimating that she was at liberty to depart when she thought proper.

Having looked several times, with silence and surprise, now at Mr Fenton, and again at the money, I should be very ill deserving of your bounty, Sir, she said, should I attempt any longer to impose upon you. I am not deaf as you supposed, it was only an artifice which I made use of when taken into custody, to avoid answering questions that might have brought a worthy family into disgrace. But you look so altogether the gentleman and the kind-hearted Christian, that I think I ought to have no reserve of any kind toward you.

Be pleased then, said Mr Fenton, as far as prudence will allow, to let me know who and what you are.

I hope, Sir, she replied, that I am very far from being what I was, otherwise I should be the very vilest of the vile. Wherefore if you will allow a weakly woman to sit, I will tell you the whole of my short story, with the same openness that I make confession of my sins to him

from whom alone I can look for remission.

My maiden name was Fielding; my father was a gentleman of large fortune and good repute; he had by my mother a very worthy son, who inherits his estate, and a very unworthy daughter, who now takes the shame of confessing her faults before you.

My mother was one of the holiest of women, and brought me up, to the best of her power, in her own principles and practice; but she died when I was in the thirteenth year, an age when the blood is in the tide of flow, before I had acquired a due relish for my duty, before the yoke of Christ became easy, or his burden delightful.

My father then provided me a governess, a woman well skilled in French and needle-work, and other such shewy matters of accomplishment; a woman also of much apparent modesty and decorum, though inwardly of a debauched and lascivious disposition.

There is nothing so pernicious to the breeding and morals of children, as their being permitted to keep kitchen-company, where high-fed hussies and pampered fellows form a hot-bed of steaming sensuality and guilt.

My governess, though something elderly, took a liking to my father's clerk, a modest young man, whom, however, she had the art to seduce to her wanton purposes.

In order to promote her intrigue, in my father's absence, at evenings, she used to procure collations, and after we had eat and drank, to propose plays, and other matters of innocent merriment, as she called them.

The chief of our men-servants was one Guillaume Rampant, the butler, a comely robust fellow, and one in whom my father had placed great trust.

One night, as we were playing at Hide and Seek, this man watched the place where I sought to conceal myself, and coming softly and suddenly to me, he caught me up under one arm, and running with me to a distant apartment, he there ruined me.

A false shame did not permit me to say any thing of the matter ; and the villain had, afterwards, the insolence to threaten me, that, if I did not admit him to further familiarities, he would tell what had passed, and expose me to the family.

At length, both the governess and I proved with child, of which the house-keeper, in private, informed my father ;

whereupon my governess was turned with infamy out of doors, and I was locked up and confined in a waste room.

On the third day of my imprisonment my father entered, and having examined me with a stern though sedate severity, on my knees, and with a flood of tears, I confessed the whole affair.

The butler was then sent for. Guillaume, said my father, if you do not directly marry this strumpet, I will hang you for a rape; but if you marry her I will give you two hundred pounds to set you going in some poor way, on condition that I never see the face of either of you any more.

The last terms were immediately complied with. A license was sent for. We were married in my father's presence. The money was paid down, and we were directly turned into the streets.

Upon this small fund, and about a hundred and fifty pounds more which my husband had saved of his vales and wages, he set up a gaming-tavern, to which there was great resort; and as he was a very bold, sensible, and enterprising man, he became extremely agreeable to numbers of his customers, among whom there were many persons of fortune and distinction.

At length the time of my labour approached. I lay, for a fortnight, in agonies that admitted of little intermission. My child died within me, and was brought into the world piecemeal.

I languished, for three months after my delivery, without being able to quit my bed; and the remembrance of the pangs and miseries that I endured caused me to vow, within myself, that I would never more have any commerce with mankind.

On my recovery, therefore, I daily rejected the caresses of my husband, and, every night, I bolted myself into my chamber; whereupon he began to behave himself with great coldness and distance toward me, and to frequent the company of common and lewd women.

In about fourteen months after my marriage, my husband had a run of dice against him, whereby he lost to the amount of fifteen hundred pounds; and as he had not wherewithal to discharge the full sum, he determined, at all events, to pay to the last penny of his debts of honour, as he called them. Hereupon he began to raise contributions on the public, and, after several very bold and successful exploits, his person became notorious, and he was taken, from amidst his right honourable

associates, at a gaming-table in London, conveyed to Newgate, tried, convicted, and executed at Tyburn.

Upon this, all our substance was immediately seized by creditors, or by the officers of the sheriff, and I was turned into an unknown world, without any thing to sustain me, save a few shillings in my pocket, and the single suit of cloaths which I happened to have on my back.

I forgot to tell you, my dear Sir, that my worthy but afflicted father had died before this period; and this ought to have been the greatest of afflictions to myself; but the reason of my feelings was not yet come, and I barely dropt a slight tear, without any sense of remorse, for having been, in all likelihood, his principal executioner.

As my brother was now the only person upon earth to whom I had any right to apply for support, I accordingly went to his house with an anxious beating heart, and sent him in a written state of my very deplorable case. But his answer was, that, if ever I should again appear before his doors, he would take me up as a vagabond, and transport me to the plantations.

Wholly desperate by this disappointment, and stimulated almost to frenzy, my

blood boiled in my veins. The horrid thoughts of vengeance could alone assuage my raging spirit; and I resolved to compass my ends by poison, by dagger, or any the speediest means. For I looked upon my brother as a robber, who had spoiled me of my title to my father's affection and inheritance.

For this accursed purpose it was necessary to get near him. I sold my cloathes, and having disguised myself in the dress of a chairwoman, I engaged as a servant in a cellar over the way.

From this place I observed an infant of about two years old, who, at times, was brought to the door by the hand of his nurse; and I learned that he was the only child of my brother, and that the lives of his parents were wrapt up in him.

Here I conceived I had found an object on whom I might execute my revenge, with better safety to my own person, and greater torture to my adversary, than by any other method that invention could supply. I therefore couched on my watch, like a lioness for her prey, and spying the child alone, I shot across the street, caught him up in my arms, and away I flew.

I hastened with him as fast as I could till I reached the fields. I then got under

a ditch, and stripped him of his gay raiment, which I folded in a handkerchief; and having cut in pieces an old petticoat, and tacked it about him, I made my way to a cabin where they sold small ale and spirits, and there took up my lodgings for the first night.

I believe, Sir, I am the greatest instance that ever was, of the length to which human nature can go in reprobacy, when abandoned by God, and unvisited by his gracious motions in the heat. The strong bent which my mother had given me to religion caused me only to recoil with the greater force; and, when my father cast me off, I even reproached my God, and was at enmity with him, for having suffered me to fall into my first offence against virtue.

I was yet urged and carried further down the hill of perdition, by the example of the licentious set of profligates that daily and nightly frequented my husband's house; insomuch that, in time, I began to relish their profaneness, and my tongue, as well as my ear, at length became accustomed to oaths and execrations; a vice, of all others, the most unnatural, most shocking, and abhorred in our sex.

In fine, I became an alien and even an enemy to all goodness ; and I would willingly have been a party in any kind of wickedness, save that of personal prostitution, and this I avoided merely for fear of a second childbirth, which I dreaded more than I dreaded the torments of hell.

How pitiable, then, must have been the case of the unhappy infant who had fallen into my cruel gripe. I often suffered him, on purpose, to weep for hunger, and then would lash him for crying, that I might please myself, as it were, with the miseries of my brother in the person of his child.

For four years and nine months I led a wandering and mendicant life, in which trade my little nephew grew very successful and useful to me, so that I began to abate of my severity toward him. Detested by my relations, and outcast from the world, I cared for nothing but self ; and nightly indulged my appetite with the best victuals and liquor that my pocket could afford, from the issues of my own petitions and those of my fellow-traveller.

One day having passed through Enfield, where I had raised some petty contributions, I spied an infant on a bank, at a distance from any house, and instantly the

project occurred of exacting the larger charities by his means. I looked about, and thinking that I was not observed, I caught the child up, and ran off with all my speed. But I had not gone far, when I heard a man shouting after me, and perceived that I was pursued. Thereupon I cast down the child, with my pouch of provisions; and leaving little Ned behind me also, I made the best of my way thro' the opposite thicket.

As my terrors continued, I continued to run, till I was all in a glow and faint with fatigue; but still keeping forward, though slower and slower, God conducted me within sight of the parsonage-house of Mr Catharines, which I reached with much difficulty, and then sunk away on the threshold.

I knew nothing further of what passed till I found myself in a warm though coarse bed, with one woman holding a bottle of salts to my nose, and another presenting me with a cordial. I looked about and found myself something revived; but, on the sight of some meat which was brought to me, I again fainted.

Within some hours after, I was seized with pains in all my bones, and fell into a raging though intermitting fever. Mr Catharines, who was physician to the be-

dies as well as souls of all his flock, visited and prescribed for me, and had me attended with great humanity.

On the third night, I dreamed that an invisible hand came, and seizing me by a single hair of my head, hurried me aloft, through the regions of the air, till it held me right over a fiery gulf, in the pinnacles of whose flames a variety of dæmons appeared to hover, the horridness of whose figures was indescribable to ears of flesh and blood. They all seemed to struggle toward me, and to stretch forth their fangs to receive me; while my husband, Guillaume Rampant, ascended swiftly in the midst, and, rushing up with a pair of sheers, cut the hair that with-held me in twain; so down I thought I fell, and, giving a great shriek, I awakened to darkness and inexpressible horrors.

Though no light was in the room, my conscious spirit supplied the office. All my transgressions arose minutely and distinctly to memory. They appeared substantially, as so many fiends, within me and round about me, and I fell into an agony that threw me into a fit.

I awoke again before morning, but without any abatement of my terrors or desperation. The former objects continued to present themselves before me; and,

no longer able to support existence, I groped about for a knife, or other instrument of self-destruction ; for I said to myself, Perhaps death may bring rest to the weary and overladen, or at least afford some respite before the fearful judgment of final condemnation. So, finding no other means that suited my desperate purpose, I grasped my neck in my hands, and exerted my force to strangle myself ; but nature proved repugnant to the completion of an office against herself, and I sunk from my agonies into a second fit.

On the breaking of the day, Mr Catharines entered, but as the room was darkened, I did not know who he was. He approached my bed, and taking hold of my hand, he sighed and said, You are very ill, poor woman, exceeding ill, indeed ! you have more need of a physician for your soul than your body ; if you please then I will kneel down and pray with you and for you, that God may receive your departing spirit.

O no Sir, I cried, I cannot pray ; even to hear a prayer would be worse than hell to me. I have no God, no Saviour, they have long since departed from me ; I am a sinner to whom hope can never come ; Omnipotence itself can do nothing for me ; I feel that, if God would, he can-

not save me, except he were to create me over again.

And he can create you over again, cried the good Mr Catharines; even in this instant he can make you a new nature and a new creature; he can save you from all your sins by an inward salvation, by pouring the abundance of himself into your bosom.

O Sir, I exclaimed, you do not know how vile I am. Even now I am in hell; the fiends have the property and possession of me. O if any single soul were to suffer, for everlasting, what I suffered last night, better it were that creation had never been.

Here I recounted to him my dream, with the agonies that I felt, and my attempt to destroy myself; when the comforting saint cried out, Good hopes, good hopes! very excellent hopes, indeed! These are strong and blessed compunctions. I see that the Saviour of sinners is determined not to lose you. Be of good cheer! here, take this julap to recruit your wearied spirits, that you may be able to lay open the woundings of your soul to the ministering physician of your dear and loving Lord.

But do you think, Sir, said I, that there is any hope for me? Hope, cried he,

there is assurance, more stable than the marble foundations of the earth! God is all love; he is nothing but love; he never rejected any that once turned unto him. His incarnation, his whole task and business upon earth, his sufferings and crucifixion, his agonies and death, were chosen and embraced by him, for the love and sake of sinners. It is in the regions of sinning Nephthali, in the darkness and shadow of death, that the light of the loving JESUS delights to spring up. But come my dear sister, tell me who and what you are? Lay open, with truth and honesty, the manifold distempers of your sin-sick soul; your weakness, your poverty, your nakedness, your pollutions, your errors, and your emptiness; and he, who shineth in darkness, will descend into you, my sister, and will be your strength, and the riches of pardoning mercy to you; and will cover your nakedness, and purify your pollutions, and turn your errors into rectitude, and your emptiness into the fulness of the joy and glory of your God!

Here I made him a full recital of all the passages of my life, as openly, but much more minutely, than I have done to your honour. Never was man so affected: he groaned, he sobbed aloud, he wet his

handkerchief with his tears, as though it had been drenched in the river.

As soon as I had concluded, Do you not know me then? he cried, (breaking afresh into tears) do you not know me, Mrs Phæbe? Know you not Marmaduke Catharines, your brother's tutor and your tutor, the man from whose lips you used to imbibe instruction with so much avidity? Ah, had I stayed, nothing of this would have happened, but your brother got me presented to a rich living here, and so I left my vineyard and the fruits thereof unguarded? O that cursed Rampant? I left my lamb to the voracious and remorseless wolf!—From your infancy, Mrs Phæbe, you were the darling of my affections; the day did not seem to shine in which I saw you not. Your smiles cheered my spirit, and your unaffected graces played round my heart.

Your brother, too, saw and approved my passion for you. What happiness did he not promise to himself in our union! We will be brothers, he cried, my Catharines, folding me fast in his arms; we will be brothers in reality, as well as inclination!

But those blissful prospects soon vanished away. You were seduced, my daughter, you were seduced from your duty,

from your God, and your lover. Your brother writ me an account of your fatal falling away, and I spent my nights in tears and my days in anguish.

Ah, how you are altered even in person and aspect! I could not have known you again. Sin hath taken away the innocence and sweetness of your countenance, and spread a cloudiness and stain in the place thereof. But you are returned, my child, you are returned to virtue and piety, to yourself and to your God! and he will once more beautify you, and make you, as the King's daughter, all glorious within, and deck you with living sapphires, even the morning-stars of the preparation of the appearance of JESUS!

While the holy man spoke, the nether millstone of my heart began to dissolve; my agonies and terrors departed from me; my breast began to heave with a kindly though sad emotion; and a torrent of tears greatly eased my distemper, both of body and mind.

Mr Catharines, as I afterwards learned, on hearing of my doleful miscarriage, had vowed to himself, in secret, never to have commerce with womankind.

A widowed lady, however, of large fortune and liberal education, but much advanced in years, happened to reside in

the neighbourhood. She was first caught by the simple though affecting piety of his discourses from the pulpit. She visited, and was visited by him. She was then further charmed by the lustre of his sentiments, the sanctitude of his manners, and the sweetness of his disposition. Sir, said she to him one day, I am, by birth, a foreigner, and neither have children, nor any relation of my blood, in this kingdom, who, on my decease, may put in for a title to my fortune. I blush not to tell you, that, if I were young and beautiful, you are the man of the world whom I would have chosen for my husband. But my defects take nothing from your great merits. You are as precious in my eyes, as if I were deserving of you; and I am desirous of making you my own for life, provided you swear to me, before the nuptial knot is tied, that my fortune, my company, and my obedience, are all that ever you will require from me in right of our marriage. You shall live, and shall be as an only son to me; and I will have for you, at once, all the duty of a wife, and the tenderness of a mother.

I am not insensible of what gibbers may say, respecting the impropriety of certain appetites at my years; but I trust, by my conduct, to disabuse their opinion, and to

cause all occasions of stumbling, in my neighbour, to cease.

In the mean time, my two capital prospects will be compassed by this scheme ; the one, of giving myself a legal title to your company ; the other, of giving you a legal title to my fortune.

A proposal, for such a species of marriage, answered exactly to Mr Catharine's vow of celibacy. The lady, though considerably upward of sixty, shone in all the graces and attractions of youth, excepting only those personal allurements to concupiscence, toward which Mr Catharines had resolved on an aversion ; he could therefore form no rational objection to the scheme ; and within a few weeks, they were privately married.

While I wept, as I told you, Sir, under a kindly remorse for my manifold offences, Mr Catharines kneeled down and poured forth his prayers beside me, with an elocution so warm, and so deeply affecting, as entered and searched through my heart and my reins, and seemed to tear out, by the roots, all the evil that was in me.

As soon as he had ended, and that I had thanked him, with words half-suffocated, for the graciousness of his consolations, Mrs Catharines came in. Would you then, Sir, said she, would you mono-

polize all the charities? will you not suffer a sister near the Throne of Grace, who may assist in the under-services to the servants of our Master.

My dear, said he tenderly, I was about to request your presence. Here lies on the bed of sickness, and perhaps of death, the daughter of my patron, the sister of my friend, and once the dearest object of my affections and prospects for life. Pray order a chamber for her more becoming her station and my debts to her family.

She, instantly, went out with alacrity, and without reply; and, within a few minutes, several female servants entered, who, gently wrapping me in the cloathes, wherein I lay, conveyed me to a bed ready sheeted and warmed, that stood in a small but decent apartment.

As soon as I was placed, Mrs Catharines came up, and stooping, tenderly kissed me, and said, God be very gracious unto you, my daughter!

Here I was treated with an attention and delicacy, that joined with my evil deeds to put me to utter shame. However, I began to recover apace, and within a few days was able to sit up.

On the seventh night I had a very singular dream or vision, which will never

depart my memory ; and which, I trust, through life and death, will preserve its happy and comforting influence upon me.

Methought I walked, with vast crowds of fine and merry people, along a road of a gentle and pleasant descent, made easy to the foot like the Mall in London.

On a sudden, my husband Guillaume Rampant stood beside me. I surveyed him with a delight that I had never known before. He seemed to surpass in beauty all the persons around us ; his garments were embellished with gold and gems, and his countenance shone with a wonderful lustre.

Come, Miss Phæbe, said he, gracefully taking me by the hand, come with me to yonder paradise, where I will weave a garland for you of never-fading flowers, and lead you to fruits of a heavenly flavour. Immediately, a vast garden opened its blooms and incomparable beauties to my quickened imagination. The odours thereof perfumed the air, far and wide, and the burdened trees reached forth fruits of irresistible temptation.

My husband then plucked and gave me to eat of the clusters of the grape and apples of the pine, which I seized and devoured with an intemperate relish ; when, happening to look down, I perceived that

he had got the legs and hoofs of a goat, and it instantly occurred that he could be no other than the tempter of our first parents. Terrified almost to death, I did not dare to speak out ; but lifting up my heart in a secret prayer, he and his paradise immediately vanished.

At once I found myself in a vast and dreary wilderness, whose trees were barren of fruits, and the brambles of berries ; through which there was no path, and from whence there was no outlet. Go to what side I would, I had scarce made my way through one thicket when I was presented with another ; till, being spent with fatigue, I despaired of any deliverance, and sat me down to die.

Soon after, methought, Mr Catharines approached, in mean and beggared apparel, but with a majestic and stern countenance. Wretch ! he cried, are you at length come to a knowledge of the evil of your ways ? are you now come to a sense of your vile and forlorn estate ? do you find at last that I, alone, can be your stay and your helper ? So saying, he seized me by the hand, and his touch filled my frame with confidence and delight. We rose into the air, we moved together over a boundless track of desert, from whence the lions roared and the wolves bayed

at us. At length we alighted at the entrance of a narrow path, that led up the ascent of a mountainous country. The nearer side was covered with clouds, and blasted by tempest, through which the farther part seemed to gleam with a faint radiance that promised the rising day.

Courage ! said my conductor, we must ascend this mountain, in spite of all opposition ; in spite of the toils, the difficulties, and dangers ; the pains, calamities, distresses and discouragements of the way. No obstacles, I cried, shall appal or discourage me ; I will rejoice in distresses and pains, while I have you by my side.

Hereupon I felt wonderful strength and alacrity ; I ran up the ascent with a willing and eager pace, and proposed in a few minutes to reach the top. But, alas ! I was widely out in my account. The way became straiter, and steeper, and rougher. I began to fail through fatigue, and the edged flints tore my feet, and marked my footsteps with blood. Ah ! Sir, I cried, this is very grievous indeed. Peace, said he, it is very salutary ; these flints are your kindest friends, your truest physicians ; and the wounds that they give your body will be more than the balm of Gilead to the healing of your soul. I then summoned all my powers, and proceeded,

though with much anguish, which often compelled me to lean, with all my weight, upon my companion.

At length we came to a pass that was thick set and interwoven with briars and thorns, and, seeing no way, I made a full stop. Good cheer, cried my guide ! this must also be traversed ; there is no quailing now, you must endure to the end, my daughter. The thorn was pronounced a curse to the first Adam and his posterity, but your second Adam has made it a wreath of living brightness : these accordingly, are appointed to twist the garland of your blessedness, and to make you a partaker of their crown of eternal glory.

Revived by this promise, I rushed into the midst, and struggled to get forward, though screaming with anguish : but, when the thorns rent my skin, and entered into my body and soul, and lodged their stings within me, I could endure no longer ; but casting myself on my conductor, O that death, that death, I cried, would put an end to my sufferings ! He then turned and smiled upon me, and, taking me under his arm, bore me harmless through the remainder ; then, seating me on a bank, he placed himself beside me.

While I sat, still panting with pain and fatigue, he bent forward, and pulled off his sandals, I then saw the large wounds that the spike had made. My spirit instantly told me, that it was my Lord himself, under the form of his minister. I threw myself prostrate before him. My bosom opened wide; and taking hold of his feet, covered with dust as they were, I pressed them to my heart, and would have thrust them into my soul; when, on their touch, I felt such an ecstatic transport, that, if I had not awoke, my body could no longer have retained my spirit, it must instantly have issued to him who breathed it.

The consolation of this dream greatly strengthened and restored me, and hastened to get up, that I might delight myself with serving the servants of my benefactors.

When Mrs Catharines rose, she found me busied in the basest employments of the kitchen. She looked astonished. Why, my dear, she cried, would you demean yourself in this manner? O, Madam, I replied, I beseech you to leave me to my own conscience; it tells me that even this office is much too honourable for me.

When breakfast was ready, Mr Catharines came in from his morning walk of

meditation. As he entered, I cast myself before him, and, clasping his knees, cried, How blessed are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings of salvation to sinners! but, above all, blessed is he who beareth in his own person the image and impression of the Prince of peace! Being much surprised and abashed at my manner of salutation, he demanded the reason of it, and I told my dream; whereupon they were so affected, that they both shed tears of tender congratulation.

I have already told you, Sir, that Mr Catharines was physician to the bodies as well as souls of all his parishioners; I might have added, to all the country about him.

For this purpose, he provided a little kind of apothecary's shop, where he kept all manner of drugs for the sick, as well as matters of surgery for the sore and the wounded. On these occasions I became his principal deputy and assistant. I was myself, often astonished at the effects of my application in this way. I scarce remember an instance wherein I failed of success. A spirit of healing seemed to accompany my walks. I have frequently cured those who were given up as irrecoverable by the doctors and surgeons. And never had such heart-felt delight

as when on my knees I bathed the feet of the sick, or washed the ulcers of the beggar; for in them, methought, the great Physician of sin-sick souls lay before me, who had healed my own woundings, and done away my transgressions.

I should have told you, Sir, that when Mr Catharines heard that I had stolen and dropped my little nephew, the only child of his best and most beloved friend, he, that very day, dispatched a number of emissaries to Enfield, and throughout all the adjacent country, with orders to make the most diligent search and inquiry after him; but, alas! all our pains and solitudes, both then and afterward, proved fruitless. This cost me, day and night, secret deluges of tears, and served to embitter the happiest life that otherwise, perhaps, could be spent upon earth.

About three months ago, Mrs Catharines began to decline, and peaceably dropped, like over-ripe fruit, into the lap of our general mother.

Mr Catharines had often desired my permission to write to my brother in my favour; but, conscious of the injury that I had done him in the person of his child, I had hitherto declined the proposal. At length, however, I determined to throw myself at his feet, and confess my guilt,

though without any prospect of obtaining his pardon; perhaps, said I, he may think on some more successful means for the discovery of his son than we have yet hit upon. My benefactor approved of my resolution; he wrote a letter to my brother by me; and within a few days I set out in his chaise for London.

On the road, I took it into my head once more to make trial of my brother's nature, and to present myself before him as an object of his charity. For this purpose I dismissed the chaise at St Alban's. I also sent back my little baggage, with an account of my project in a note to Mr Catharines, and retained nothing but this poor garb that I have on.

On that night I was taken suddenly and extremely ill of a colic, and could keep nothing in my stomach for the six following days. I sent to London for a physician, who attended and prescribed for me; and by the time I was able to creep abroad, what with fees to the doctor, the apothecary's bill, and a still more exorbitant bill from the landlord, I had scarce three sixpences left to bear my charges to the city. With that sum, however, I set forward on foot; but, finding myself still very weak and sickly, I was tempted to repine for not having brought more mo-

ney from home ; but, again, I remembered that my master had told me, that sufferings were the best friends and physicians to such a sinner. I was, therefore, content and pleased to be once more reduced to the lowest state of beggary ; and, after three days sore travel, God was pleased to conduct me to your charitable door.

This, Sir, is the letter which my friend wrote in my favour to my brother. You see it is open ; but, before you read it, I ought to account to you for some touches of uncommon tenderness, which Mr Catharines has expressed towards me.

Some weeks after the funeral of his lady, he and I stood chatting in the front of the house. The evening was exceeding pleasant, and the maids sat singing and milking the cows before us ; when the great bull, suddenly tearing up the ground with his feet, ran furiously at his master. On seeing him approach, I shrieked and rushed into the house ; but, observing that Mr Catharines did not follow, I turned and ran as precipitately out again. There I saw that the terrible creature had pinned him up, between his horns, against the wall, at which he butted with all his force.

Then, casting fear aside, I sprung up, and, seizing the bull by one of his horns, would have torn him away from my dear protector. But my strength not availing, I caught his ear in my mouth, and bit it through and through, while I endeavoured to tear out his eyes with my nails. In the mean time, a little favourite mastiff, scarce bigger than two fists, came happily out, and, leaping up, caught the monstrous animal by the nose, whereupon he gave a hideous roar, and, flinging away, ran kicking and leaping about the yard.

I remembered nothing more till I awoke from a swoon, and perceived that Mr Catharines sat beside me. He held one of my hands, which he had washed with his tears, and which, at times, he pressed to his lips, and again to his bosom.

When he had prevailed upon me to swallow a spoonful of cordial, O my Phæbe, my Phæbe, he, cried, you have this day offered up your precious life, a victim for the preservation of mine; and, from this day forward, my life, and all that I am, is your property for ever. But tell me, my Phæbe, whence could you get, in a moment, such astonishing intrepidity? how attain to the power of acting against

nature, the constitutional terrors and delicacies of your sex? Ah, Sir, I replied, the book of life tells us, that “perfect love cast fear away.”

From that time Mr Catharines earnestly pressed me to marriage. My first, and my last, and my only love, he would say, you know that in womankind I can love nothing but you. Your whole image, your every feature is impressed upon my soul; I am already wedded to them, they are inseparable from my being. Why then do you wish to have me cast forth from my species, as a withered branch, without any kind of fruit, without one, the least little one, to bind us up together, and carry us down to posterity? O, Sir, I would then say, let not our nuptials be sullied by any gloom or regret; let me first be reconciled, if possible, to my brother, and then dispose of me as you please; it is your right so to do.

I thank you, Madam, said Mr Fenton, I thank you for your very affecting, and still more edifying narrative; and I will endeavour to recompence you for the trouble that I have given you, by being the bearer of very happy tidings. Your little nephew has lived with me almost ever since you lost him. He has received an education becoming his family, and

was this day discovered and restored to his parents.

My God, my Christ, she exclaimed, what a wonder is here ! How are blind and erring mortals, wilfully blind and wilfully erring, deserving of such a clue as this to guide them ! My nephew alive and well, discovered and restored this very day to his true parents !—I am confounded, I am crushed to the centre beneath the weight of thy benefits, O thou overflowing Fountain of mercy and grace !

Now, Madam, said Mr Fenton, now it is at your election to reveal or suppress the affair respecting your nephew. I know, Sir, she replied, you proposed this only to try me ; I desire no advantage from fraud or disguise, and could I be so base, this letter, as you will find, would detect and betray me.

Mr Fenton then unfolded the letter, and read as follows :

TO EDWARD FIELDING, Esq;

“ Friend and brother of my soul,

“ I have often reproved, and always
 “ detested, that cruel and impious custom
 “ of casting off our friends, or kindred,
 “ on account of their errors or frailty,
 “ or even of their fall from honour;

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 175

" This custom is more especially con-
" demnable and pernicious, when it af-
" fects the more tender and more pitiable
" sex : the indiscretion of their nearest
" friends begins the alarm ; the world
" follows, and increases the cry ; the
" wretches, like marked deer, are driven
" forth to the hounds, and must speedily
" become a prey to famine and death, or
" for ever be precluded from any return
" to virtue.

" Had you, my dear brother, had you
" given that charity to your only sister
" which you slightly throw to a common,
" beggar, you might have saved her soul
" alive, and have continued a happy pa-
" rent of a promising son at this day.
" She resented your treatment, she rent
" your child from you ; you merited the
" motive, but I am grieved at the con-
" sequence.

" As God has been pleased wonder-
" fully to restore your sister to virtue,
" she would rejoice to restore your son
" to you ; but it is not in her power ; he
" strayed from her within some miles of
" this place : we have used all possible
" means to recover him, but in vain ; and
" his loss hath cost her seas of tears, and
" years of anguish.

“ Receive her, then, as a precious pearl
 “ from the bottom of the deep, as a
 “ casket of gold and jewels recovered
 “ from shipwreck. She was dead, but is
 “ alive again ; she was lost, but is found.
 “ Receive her then, I say, as an angel of
 “ God, sent on purpose to effect your
 “ own salvation.

“ I know not how it comes to pass that
 “ great sinners often become the greatest
 “ of saints ; and, in a year, a month, a
 “ day, exceed in growth and stature a
 “ long life of leisurely righteousness.
 “ Their bows, as it should seem, being
 “ strongly bent the adverse way, they
 “ dart forward with the greater strength
 “ and rapidity. It is even so with our
 “ precious Phæbe. She is become a gen-
 “ tle flame of the divine loves and chari-
 “ ties. While she stands upon earth, and
 “ bends, in her lowliness, beneath all
 “ creatures, the moon of changeable
 “ things is put under her feet. She treads,
 “ as it were, upon the stars of the galaxy ;
 “ and I behold at a distance, and revere
 “ the glory of her steps.

“ Receive her then, I say again, as the
 “ dearest boon and blessing that Heaven
 “ can bestow. But, O restore her to
 “ me ; give her to me, according to pro-

“ wife, that she may assist to conduct me
 “ to that kingdom of little children,
 “ whereof she is a blessed inhabitant at
 “ this very day.

“ Yours, &c.

“ M. CATHARINES.”

You see, Sir, said Mrs Phæbe smiling, you see that Mr Catharines must be a lover, by the extravagance of his praise. I see, Madam, said Mr Fenton, that he deservedly loves; and greatly deserves also to be beloved. But, Madam, if you will be ruled by my advice, you will stay here till your brother shall call upon me, which I expect he will do in a very little time. Meanwhile, I will introduce you to a sister-saint, who has been long tried and refined in the hottest furnace of affliction.

The very next morning Mr Fielding rode to the door attended only by a single servant. As soon as he had saluted Mr Fenton, and sat down, he took out a note for 2000*l.* and presented it to him. You must not refuse, Sir, said he, to relieve my distress, by accepting this in part of what I owe you. I can spare it, without the smallest inconvenience. I have lately recovered a tract of land that lies contiguous.

ous to Mr Catharines, the worthy man of whom you heard me speak yesterday ; so that I shall soon have the pleasure of taking possession of a considerable accession to my fortune, and at the same time, the greater pleasure of embracing so very dear a friend. This sum, Sir, said Mr Fenton, comes very seasonably to the relief of a person for whom I have conceived an extraordinary esteem and affection ; a person who is entitled to my best service, and who may also be entitled to your further munificence. So saying, Mr Fenton rose, went to the door, took Mrs Phæbe by the hand, and leading her toward her brother, This Sir, said he, is the gentlewoman of whom I spoke, and whom I recommend to your tenderest regards.

Mr Fielding looked earnestly and inquisitively at his sister, changed colour, and, for a while, sat mute with astonishment, when suddenly rising, and stepping hastily to her, he clasped her in his arms, and cried aloud, My Phæbe, my dearest Phæbe, my long lost long sought, long lamented sister ! have I found you at last ? are my prayers at length heard ? and are you once more restored to my bosom, my sister ! Ah, what must have been your sufferings ! what have I not suffered myself, from the stinging recollection of the bar-

barity of my behaviour? But, at the time that you applied to me, I was exasperated against you, by being told you had turned out a common prostitute; and, from your connection with that reprobate to whom my father had unhappily married you, I was ready to believe the worst that could be reported concerning you. Pardon me, however, my Phæbe, do but promise me your pardon, and I will endeavour to compensate for my injurious treatment of you.

Here, the sister dropped on her knees, and, breaking into tears and sobs, replied, You want no pardon, my brother, you never wronged me.—I deserved all sorts of evils; they were due to my transgressions—but I have injured you, I fear, past forgiveness, my brother.—It was I who stole your little darling, who robbed you of your only child, and caused you so many years of sorrow and bitterness.—I deserved it, I deserved it at your hands, exclaimed Mr Fielding; let us then exchange forgiveness, my Phæbe; for our child is restored to us, and we remember our sorrows no more. So saying, his eyes filled, and, tenderly raising his sister, he took her again to his bosom.

Mr Fenton, wholly melted by this passionate scene, took them jointly in his

arms, and then silently seated them opposite to each other.

My sister, said Mr Fielding, you have promised me your pardon, before you were acquainted with the extent of my faults. Our dear father, in his last illness, made me sit by his side ; when, heaving a deep sigh, he thus began : I fear, I fear, my son, that I have greatly wronged your sister. I grieve at heart that I had her married to that ruffian Rampant. With a little less of severity, and more of tender admonition, she might have arisen from her fall ; she might have returned to virtue and honour ; her errors might have been forgotten ; perhaps, restored to rectitude, she might have been less wretched, and my days might have been longer. She was young, she was artless, and obvious to seduction. I, myself, joined to betray her, by that she-wolf whom I appointed the guardian of my lamb. Perhaps, as she affirmed, her inclination no way concurred with the force that was offered her. We ought as far as possible, to have covered her shame : shame only serves to bronze over a bashful countenance, and make it altogether shameless. Alas, my child, all things appear quite different, at my death, from what they did during my lifetime ; and the pride of blood, and the resentment for injured gentility, give place to

the calls of nature and the feelings of humanity.

I intended your sister five thousand pounds ; but by my will I have cut her off with a shilling, lest the villain, her husband, should come in for any share of our substance. Wherefore I leave you, in my place, at once the father, the brother, and the guardian of my dear child—and here his bursting tears prevented another word.

As soon as he was more composed, he proceeded :—I adjure you, my son, in the name of our common father, in the name of that God to whom I am going, I adjure you, I say, to keep a constant watch over the conduct of your still precious sister, my son ! and, if such a one may be found, to keep in fee some discreet and pious matron, who may insinuate into her acquaintance, and gain her confidence, and preserve her from a further progress in the paths of vice ; for, O the soul of my wrecked child, at this hour, is infinitely precious in my eyes !

I further enjoin you, that, in case the reprobate, her husband, should perish by sword or pistol, or by the gallows, as is most likely, you will pay your sister the sum of three thousand pounds, but gradually at first, as her necessities may crave ;

and the whole, on your assurance of her return to virtue.

While her brother was speaking, Mrs Phæbe had thrown her apron over her face, and by her groans and passionate sobs prevented his proceeding. At length she exclaimed, Wretch, parricide that I am! I have cut short the sacred life of him who brought me to the world. You then loved me, my father, you still continued to love me, though I knew it not; and I have murdered the kindest, the tenderest of parents; but I will die to make atonement, I will not survive you, my father!

Mr Fielding then arose, and stepped affectionately to his sister, and taking her in his arms, and mixing his tears with hers, endeavoured to console her. You did not, my dearest sister, you did not murder him, he cried; you accuse yourself of faults of which you are no way guilty. Our father was aged, and laboured under a complication of disorders that must, shortly, have put a period to all that was mortal in him. Be comforted then, I say, be comforted, my sister!

When Mr Fielding had resumed his seat, and the violence of his sister's passion had subsided, he looked earnestly and tenderly at her. I will, said he, my Phæbe

at some other time, account to you for the motive of my barbarity toward you, and how I was imposed upon by the very person whom I kept in pay to give me intelligence concerning you. But tell me how it comes to pass that, in my life, I never saw you look so charmingly? even during your infant years you never had such a sweet simplicity, such a heavenly childishness of countenance as you now have. It is, said Mr Fenton, because she is the King's daughter, "all glorious within," and the loveliness of her spirit informs and shines through her aspect—But here is a known character that will fully clear up the matter. And so saying, he presented him with the letter from Mr Catharines, when, at the sight of the superscription, Mr Fielding gave an exclamation of surprise: then, unfolding, he read it in deep silence, but by fits, and interruption; frequently putting, and long holding his handkerchief to his eyes.

As soon as he had finished, Yes, yes, my dear Catharines, my brother, he cried, the wish of my heart shall be accomplished for us both! You shall have your Phæbe restored to you, and she shall be restored to you with Benjamin's portion, even a double portion!—But, O my God, how wonderful, how miraculous is all

this! to have my only child, and my only sister, at once restored to me by one and the same hand! Teach me, teach me, Mr Fenton, by some new method of gratitude, to express a part of the sense of what I owe you!

You have already, Sir, cried Mr Fenton, done and said by much too much upon that head, and have thereby given me great pain instead of gratification. The payment that I get is a treasure hidden from all men, save him to whom it is given. I will not, however, do you the offence to return you your bill, but shall dispose of it in a manner that, I trust, will be nearly as equitable. Meanwhile, my dear friend, I most cordially congratulate you on the signal evidences that have been given of the favour of your God to you, and of his watchful and intending providence over you and yours. I suppose you will soon set out, with your amiable sister here, on your visit to your friend and brother the worthy Mr Catharines. I shall heartily pray for a blissful issue to the union of the fainted pair, and I request you to favour me with a call on your way.

Within an hour after, Mr Fielding set off for London, on horseback, and Harry accompanied his sister, in Mr Fenton's

post chaise, upon a short visit to his friend Ned.

As soon as they were departed, Mr Fenton took paper, and wrote the following letter to Mr Catharines :

“ Reverend and dear Sir,

“ Allow a stranger, but a very warm
 “ lover of yours, to felicitate you with
 “ his whole heart on the success of af-
 “ fairs. Our precious Phæbe was recei-
 “ ved with transport by her brother, and
 “ you cannot be more impatient than
 “ he is for your union. He generously
 “ presented me with the inclosed bill for
 “ 2000 *l.* merely because God had an-
 “ pointed me an humble instrument for
 “ doing him some little matter of ser-
 “ vice. Though I determined not to ac-
 “ cept any part thereof, yet I dreaded to
 “ grieve him by an avowed refusal. I
 “ therefore restore it to you and your
 “ Phæbe, as a matter of equity next to
 “ that of returning it to himself. It is
 “ surely full as proper that your family
 “ should take charge of that wherewith
 “ providence had been pleased to entrust
 “ them, as that I should be incumbered
 “ with the disposal thereof. And indeed,
 “ my dear Sir, I am already burdened
 “ with more trusts of this nature than

“ I fear, I shall be able duly to account
“ for.

“ That your heart may always continue
“ where your true treasure is already laid
“ up, is the wish of, dear Sir,” &c.

When he had folded and sealed his letter, he took bills from his pocket-book, to the amount of 1300*l.* and, on Harry's return from London, presented them to him. Here, my dear, said he, here is what will enable you to be more than just to your engagements, it will enable you to be generous also. And I desire, my Harry, in matters of charity, that you may never stint the sweet emotions of your heart; for we have enough, my child, and we are but the stewards of the bounty of our God.

Here Harry's speech was stopped, but his silence was more eloquent than a thousand harangues. He suddenly threw his arms about his dear dada, and, hiding his face in his bosom, he there vented the tears of that pleasure, love, and gratitude, with which he found himself affected.

On the afternoon of the following day, Harry and Arabella went to drink tea with the widow Neighbourly, who received them with a countenance that spoke an uncommon welcome. Some other company had arrived before them, and rose on

their entrance. When all were again seated, Mrs Neighbourly very affectionately questioned Harry concerning his dada.

On hearing the name of Mr Fenton, an elderly gentlewoman started. Pray, Madam, said she eagerly, is this master Fenton, the son of that noble gentleman who lives on the hill? He is Madam, said Mrs Neighbourly. My God! exclaimed the stranger, can this suckling be the father of the orphan and the widow? Is this he who goes about turning sorrow into joy? who wipes the tears from the afflicted, and heals the broken of heart? Permit me then, thou beloved child of the Father which is in heaven, permit me to approach and throw myself at the feet of my preserver!

So saying, she rose with a rapturous motion, and, dropping at Harry's knees, she clasped his legs and kissed his feet, before he could prevent her.

Poor Harry, much to be pitied, sat astonished, abashed, and distressed to the last degree. At length, recollecting, and disengaging himself with difficulty, My dear Madam, he cried, you hurt me greatly; what have I done that you should put me to so much pain?

Babe of my heart, she cried, I am the wife of your Vindex, your own Vindex,

whom you redeemed from beggary and slavery; whom you restored to his wretched partner, whom you restored to his infant-daughter; all pining and perishing apart from each other, but now united by you, my angel, in joy and thanksgiving!

Here her words were suffocated, and throwing herself back in her chair, she was not ashamed to give way to her tears and, putting her handkerchief to her face, she vented her passion aloud.

Harry then rising and going tenderly to her, put his arms about her, and kissed her forehead, and then her lips. You owe me nothing, my dear Mrs Vindex, said he, I am still greatly in your debt: I was the very naughty boy who brought your misfortunes upon you. But I am willing to make you amends, and that will do me a great pleasure, instead of the punishment which I deserve.

The tea-table was now laid, and Mrs Vindex grew more composed; when her husband entered, leading his daughter by the hand, a very pretty little girl of about six years old. Harry instantly sprung up, and running and throwing himself with a great leap upon him, he hung about his neck, crying, How glad I am to see you, my dear Mr Vindex! Boy of boys, cried

Vindex, am I so blessed as to have you once more in my arms !

The company then rose and saluted Mr Vindex, and congratulated him on his return to his ancient habitation. But Harry took him aside, and having cautioned him in a whisper, not to take any notice of what should pass, he stole a bill for 160*l.* into his hand, saying softly, It is good first to be honest, so there is what I owe you : and here also is a small matter for your daughter ; I did not know, till now, that we had such a sweet little charge in our family. So saying, he slipped to him another bill of 50*l.* and then, turning from him, stepped carelessly to his seat, as though nothing had happened.

Mean time the astonished Vindex was greatly oppressed. He did not dare to offend Harry by an open intimation of his recent bounty, and yet he could feel no ease till the secret should be disclosed. He therefore stole softly to the back of our hero's chair, where, unperceived of Harry he displayed the bills to the company, beckoning, at the same time, in a way that forbade them to take any notice ; then, raising his hands over his head, and lifting his eyes toward Heaven, he blessed his benefactor, in a silent ardent ejacu-

ulation, and, taking an empty seat, joined in with the company.

While they were in chat, the little Susanna slipped unnoticed, from beside her mamma, and veering over toward Harry, she went on one side, and then on the other, and surveyed him all about; then, coming closer, she felt his cloaths, and next his hands, in the way, as it were, of claiming acquaintance with him. At length, looking fondly up to his face, she lisped and said, Me voud kifs oo, if oo voud ask me. Indeed then, said Harry, me vill kifs oo, fedder oo vill or no. And so, catching her up on his knee, he pressed her to his bosom, and kissed her over and over again.

You all see, cried Mr Vindex, it is not one of the elders with whom our Susanna has fallen in love. My sweet babe, cried Mrs Vindex, her little heart instinctively led her to her best friend, to the one of all living who best deserved her love. Miss Susanna, said Mrs Clement, puts me in mind of some very delicate lines in Milton respecting our Virgin Mother. For she also refused to kifs the loveliest man that ever was created, at least till she was asked.

———“ And though divinely brought,
 “ Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
 “ Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
 “ That would be woo'd and not unsought be won,
 “ Not obvious, nor obtrusive, but retir'd,
 “ The more desirable.”

It is happy, said Mrs Neighbourly, for our weakly and over-affectionate sex, that God has been pleased to fix a monitor within us, who struggles against our inclinations, who fights against our affections, and is, with difficulty, won over to acquiesce in our desires. I know not else what might become of the most of womankind.

But then, said Mrs Vindex, are we not rather to be pitied, that, even when our propensities are warrantable, we are prohibited, by custom, from giving any intimation thereof to the object? while the licentious reprobate, man, roves and riots at large and unreprieved, beyond the pale over which it is treason for us to look.

I do not pity you, ladies, said Mr Vindex I do not at all pity you on account of any restraints that custom has laid you under respecting chastity, or its environs, called decorum. The chastity of woman is the only basis upon which the order, honour, and peace of the world can be built: it twists the sacred and endearing

cord of society : without it there could be no amity, no brotherhood upon earth. But then, surely, there is much respect and tenderness due to those from whom such advantages are derived. Whereas I have observed, on the contrary, that the most amiable of your sex are generally mated to tyrants ; to men who, being born and appointed their protectors, pervert every end of nature and duty, and treat, with injury, contempt, and insult, the gentle saints whom they should have cherished with their most respectful endearments.

The question yet occurs, said Arabella, whether your devils of husbands find us angels, or make us such ? Tyrants are like files, they serve to smooth and polish whatever they are applied to. I was once in company with a man who was called the saint-maker ; he had married five shrews in succession, and made Grizels of every one of them before they died.

But pray, ladies, said Harry, are there no tyrants among the wives ? I lately took a walk to Towerhill, and, growing hungry, I turned in to a little shop of groceries, where a slender skinny woman, of about four feet high, stood behind the counter. Taking out a sixpence, I threw it on the board, and desired her to give me

the value in almonds and raisins. She had scarce weighed my merchandise, when a huge jolly-looking quaker came up to the hatch-door, but seemed fearful of opening it. The moment the little woman had cast her eye toward him, she exclaimed, in a shrill and exasperated accent, Art thee there, thou rogue, thou hangdog, thou gallows-fac'd vagabond? when, gathering up the whole dignity and importance of his person, and clapping a hand on each side, he cried, with an undaunted air, "I tell thee, Mary, I fear thee not!" Ah, thou villain, she vociferated, dares thee then appear in my presence? get thee back to thy fellows and hussies on whom thee spendest my substance! Still, however, he kept his ground, and courageously repeated, "I tell thee, Mary, I fear thee not!" Not fear me! Sirrah, sirrah, not fear me! says she; we shall see that in a twinkling. So saying, she whipt up the measuring yard, and scud-ding round the counter, she flew to the door. But he was already vanished as fast as his fat sides would let him. And, to tell you the truth, ladies, there was something so authoritative and tremendous in the little body's voice and manner, that I was glad to get out and to scamper after him.

The company laughed heartily; and Mr Vindex added, I forget the hero's name, a great general he was, and I think a Frenchman. He won every battle abroad; but was sure to be beaten in his turn also, as often as he returned home to his wife.

Well said Hercules and the distaff, cries Harry! But to the point, the bravest man I know is one Peter Patience, a currier, who lives in the suburbs. My tutor and I were walking one day through Islington, when we perceived the likelihood of a scuffle at a distance.

As we approached, we saw one man making up, with great fury, to another, who would have avoided him, and who, retiring backward across the street, parried his blows, and kept him off as well as he could. His enraged adversary would then have closed in upon him, but, grasping his shoulder with a long and very strong arm, he still held his enemy aloof, who nearly spent all his efforts and blows in the air.

Never did I see so living a representation of heaven and of hell, as was visible in the faces of those two men. The muscles of the one were frightfully distorted; his eyes shot fire, and his mouth frothed with madness; while the countenance of

the other was as a lake in a summer's evening, that shews heaven in its bosom, and reflects all the beauties of nature around it.

Be quiet, Ben, he said; you know that I would not hurt you, you know that I love you. What a fool the man makes of himself! Are you not sensible that I could demolish you with a single blow? but I cannot find in my heart to do it. Be quiet, Ben, I say, I see you want to vex me, but I wont be vexed by you, my dear Ben.

While the gentler Peter was thus expostulating with his exasperated friend, Mrs. Patience, as it should seem, had seen all that passed from an upper casement; and flying down stairs, and rushing out at the door, she seized her husband behind, by the hair of his head, and tore and cuffed away at a terrible rate.

Poor Peter, finding himself thus between two fires, gave a slight trip to his male-assailant, who instantly fell with his shoulder against the pavement, and, rising with difficulty, limped homeward, muttering curses all the way.

Then Peter, turning meekly to the lady-mistress of his house, Gatty, my love, says he, what have I done to provoke you?—O, she cried, you mean-spirited,

hare-hearted, milk-livered poltroon, I'll teach you what it is to suffer every fellow to pommel you!—Sirrah, sirrah, (and still she cuffed) I'll have you tied down at the foot of the market-cross, with notice on your breast, for all who pass to p—s upon you.

Then quite angry to see the man so abused, to whom I had taken such a fancy, I rushed in between man and wife, and seized Mrs Patience by both her hands; but wrenching one of them from me, she gave me a round cuff on the side of my head. I was, however, too well used to cuffs to matter that much, and so, catching one of her hands in both of mine, I gave her a pluck to me, and a foot at the same time, and laid her on the broad of her back in the kennel.

My friend Peter looked quite astonished at this, and fearing what might happen to me on the rising up of his wife, he tucked me like a gizzard under the wing of a turkey, and off he scoured with me down the street; while Mr Clement also made pretty nimbly after us, for fear, as I supposed, that Mrs Patience, when on her legs, might take him for one of our company.

As soon as we had turned a corner, and were out of harm's way, honest Peter set

me down. My friend, says I, if you would be advised by me, you will not be in a mighty hurry to get back to your wife : I see a house of entertainment yonder, and I wish to be further acquainted with you. Adad, said he, you are the boldest little boy that ever I knew ; you performed a feat to-day that made me tremble for you. Had any other man though used my wife so—but I pass that matter over ; I see you're too great a hero to be threatened by any one, and I should consider that you did what you did for my sake.

So saying, we all went into a sort of tavern, and being shewn to a little parlour, I called for a pint of white-wine.

As soon as we were seated, I took my new acquaintance very lovingly by the hand. My dear friend, said I, I have conceived a great respect and fondness for you, and should be glad to know who and what you are. I am a currier by trade, Sir, and my name is Peter Patience. You are patience itself, indeed, said Mr Clement ; but your wife, as I think, has taken the whole trade of the currier into her own hands.

Peter laughed and replied, She is a dear and a sweet girl as ever lay by the side

of a man, and she loves me as she loves her own soul. Her blows were sweet blows to me, they were the blows of her affection. For though I did not matter the strokes of my friend Benjamin a single philip, yet every one of them went to her heart, and she wanted to frighten me from ever taking the like again.

But pray, says I, how happened the quarrel between you and your friend Benjamin, as you call him? Why there it is too, said Peter; he also beat me out of his downright and true-hearted kindness to me.

As this is holiday in the afternoon among us trades-folk, Ben Testy invited me to a share of a can of slip, at the cat and bagpipes over the way. Just as we sat down, Peter, says he, I am told that your Gatty is with child; I believe it may be so, says I. I am glad of it, Peter, with all my heart; and so now remember that I bespeak myself gossip. Why, that may happen, says I, just as matters shall turn out. If the child is a boy, you shall be one of the godfathers and welcome; but if it is a girl, this cannot be, for my uncle Geoffry has already engaged himself, and I have some expectations from him. And so, says he, you refuse to admit me for your gossip. If it is a girl, says I, you see

that I cannot. O, he cried, I had forgot, I was a rascal for proposing it : you're of high blood, have high relations, and so scorn to have connections with a poor tradesman like me. That is not the case indeed, my dear Ben, but—Damn your dears, says he, I will have no more of them ! you are a covetous scoundrel, and value money more than love. Well, says I, but will you be patient, will you hear reason, my friend ? Friend, friend, says he, my curse upon all such friendships ! I see into you now. You're an ungrateful, unloving, cold-hearted villain, and I would sooner be godfather to a child of the Turk. So saying, he struck at me, and repeated his blows across the table. But as I saw that his choler was inflaming more and more, I got up and retreated, merely intending to defend myself till his passion should be spent upon me. But you saw what happened, gentlemen, which I am heartily sorry for, as I fear that my poor dear fellow is much hurt.

Well, said my tutor, I have heard many definitions, and many disputes concerning the word Courage, but I never saw the thing itself till this day. Pray Mr Peter, were you never angry ? Scarce ever, Sir, that I remember ; at least on

my own account ; for I do not fear any man that steps upon the earth, and what is it then that should make me angry ? A man may be angry, said Mr Clement, from other motives sure, besides that of fear. God himself can be angry, and yet he cannot possibly fear.

I am feelingly assured, Sir, replied the valiant Peter, that God was never angry in his whole life ; and that is a long time, that has neither beginning nor ending. Don't you believe the gospel ? says Mr Clement ; the scripture assures us, in a hundred places, of the anger of God against impenitent sinners. I am the son of a clergyman, Sir, said Peter, and mayhap could quote scripture as well as another. The scriptures were written for man ; but how should man understand them, if they were not written according to his own language and to his own passions ? I will ask you a question, Sir, Can you be angry at a mite or a worm which you can crush into nothing at pleasure ? I think not, said my tutor. No certainly, said Peter, because you cannot fear a thing that has not power to offend you. Now all the world is but as a worm or mite to God ; and neither man nor angels can disturb or affect him with any thing, except delight, on

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 201

their acceptance of that happiness which he desires to give to all his creatures.

Ay but, says Mr Clement, you see that God's anger and indignation was so great against sin, that nothing could satisfy for it save the death of his beloved Son. Ay but, says Peter, the scripture, which you quote, tells you, that it was not his anger, but his love that sent him to us. "For God so loved the world," a very sinful world indeed! "that he gave his only begotten Son to take his death upon the cross." And I am as fully assured, as I am of my own being, that the same gracious God, who has already redeemed poor sinners, would willingly redeem the poor devils also, if they could but find in their hearts to desire his salvation.

Here, catching and clasping his hand, My dear Peter, says I, I embrace and wish from my heart that your doctrine may be true. I have many tutors, Mr Peter, and my dada pays them all with pleasure for the instructions that they give me. Tell me then, Mr Peter, what must he give you for the lesson, which you have taught me? What lesson, my hero? A very precious lesson, says I; a lesson that will always teach me "to despise myself for a coward, whenever I shall be angry."

Peter then sprung up, without speaking a word, and hugged, and clasped, and kissed me with all his affections. Then plucking a button from the upper part of my coat, I will accept of this token, my darling, says he; and will look at it, many a time in the day, for your sake.

But Mr Peter, says I, I think it would be my advantage to keep up an acquaintance with you, and this cannot be so well done while your dear Gatty is angry with me. You must therefore promise me to carry a token to her also, as an olive-branch of that peace which I want to be made between us. I will, my love, says he; I never refuse to give or accept the favours of a friend. You must be upon honour then, not to reject what I offer you. I am upon honour, he said.

I then slipped something into his hand, at which he looked and looked again; and then cried out, from the overflowings of a good and grateful heart, You are either of the blood-royal, or ought to be so! For the man was very poor, though so very sensible and well-descended, and so he looked upon a little as a great matter.

Here Harry closed his narration, and all the company gathered about him, and nearly smothered him with their caresses,

in which little Susanna came in for her full share.

On the following day Harry introduced his friend Vindex and family to his dear dada, who received them with a graciousness that soon dispelled that awkward diffidence and humbling sense of obligations under which the late unhappy preceptor apparently sunk.

As soon as it was known abroad that Mr Vindex enjoyed the patronage and good countenance of Mr Fenton and his family, his former friends resorted to him, his acquaintance was sought by all the neighbourhood, his credit was restored, his school daily increased, and, like Job, his latter end was far more blessed than his beginning.

Within a few weeks, Mr and Mrs Fielding, with their sister Phæbe, our friend Ned, and a splendid equipage, called and breakfasted at Mr Fenton's; and, soon after, Mr Fenton and his Harry, with Mr and Mrs Clement, attended their visitants to St Alban's, where all together, they spent the happiest night; only that this happiness was blended, at times, with the affecting consideration of parting in the morning.

For two succeeding years and upward, little interesting happened, save that our

hero increased in stature, and all personal accomplishments, and had happily got over the measles and small-pox. He was now nearly master of the Latin and Greek languages. He could outrun the reindeer, and outboud the antelope. He was held in veneration by all masters of the noble science of defence. His actions was vigour, his countenance was loveliness, and his movement was grace.

Harry, by this time, was also versed in most of the select and interesting portions of history. Mr Clement had instructed him in the use of the globes and maps; and as he there led him from clime to clime, and country to country, he brought him acquainted with the different manners, customs, laws, politics, government, rise, progress, and revolutions of the several nations through which they passed. Finally, said Clement, you see, Master Fenton, that the mightiest states, like men, have the principles of growth, as likewise of dissolution, within their own frame. Like men, they are born and die, have their commencement and their period. They arise, like the sun, from the darkness of poverty, to temperance, industry, liberty, valour, power, conquest, glory, OPULENCE—and there is their zenith. From whence they decline to ease, fee-

social
ardie
And
M
give
of th
a cor
poise,
tered
tion;
and th
confu
For
ry to
love,
State,
privile
perform
lar, in
to man
Sho
friends
for eig
then b
GREAT
most i
fided b
Here
ther pe
miniatur
But, b
VOL.

ality, venality, vice, corruption, cowardice, imbecility, infamy, SLAVERY. And so good night.

Mr Fenton now judged it full time to give our hero an insight into the nature of the constitution of his own country; a constitution, of whose construction, poise, action, and counteraction, the lettered Mr Clement had scarcely any notion; and even the learned in our laws, and the leaders in our senate, but a very confused idea.

For this especial purpose he called Harry to his closet. You are already, my love, said he, a member of the British State, and, on that account, have many privileges to claim, and many duties to perform toward your country in particular, independent of your general duties to mankind.

Should it please God to bless your friends with the continuance of your life for eight or ten years longer, you will then be a member of the legislature of GREAT BRITAIN, one of the highest and most important trusts that can be confided by mankind!

Here, my Harry, I have penned, or rather pencilled, for your use, an abstract in miniature of this wonderful constitution. But, before I give it for your study and

frequent perusal, I would give you some knowledge of the claims whereon it is founded; as also of the nature of man in his present depraved state, and of his several relations as a subject and as a sovereign.

Man comes into this world the weakest of all creatures, and, while he continues in it, is the most dependent. Nature neither clothes him with the warm fleece of the sheep, nor the gay plumage of the bird; neither does he come forth in the vigour of the foal or the fawn, who, on the hour of their birth, frisk about, and exult in the blessing of new existence.

Sacred history, indeed, intimates, that man was originally created invulnerable and immortal; that the fire could not burn him, stones wound, air blast, nor water drown him. That he was the angelic lord and controller of this earth, and these heavens that roll around us; with power to see, at once, into the essences, natures, properties, and distinctions of things; to unfold all their virtues, to call forth all their beauties, and to rule, subdue, and moderate these elements at pleasure.

These, truly, were god-like gifts, illustrious powers and prerogatives, and well becoming an offspring produced in the

express
and a

Tru
nothing
glory.

subject

you sa

has ev

about

ridge

boaste

shows,

that th

is man

This

to rem

state in

deed, i

man; l

to prov

ginal fl

of some

mediate

beauty

Even fo

ured st

many

magnifi

infinity

ternity

ation r

express image of an all-potent, all-wise, and all-beneficent Creator.

True, Sir, said Harry; but then we see nothing now of all this greatness and glory. Man, on the contrary, is himself subjected to all the elements over which, you say, he was appointed the ruler; he has every thing to fear from every thing about him; even the insects and little midges fearlessly attack and sting this boasted lord of the creation; and history shews, from the beginning of the world, that the greatest of all enemies to man is man.

This, replied Mr Fenton, is continually to remind him of the depraved and guilty state into which he has fallen. Man, indeed, is now no better than the remains of man; but then these remains are sufficient to prove the lustre and dignity of his original state. When you behold the ruins of some lofty and spacious palace, you immediately form an idea of the original beauty and stateliness of the structure. Even so, in our present feeble and fractured state, a discerning eye may discover many traces and fragments of man's magnificent ruin—thoughts that wing infinity; apprehensions that reach thro' eternity; a fancy that creates, an imagination that contains a universe; wishes

that a world hath not wherewithal to gratify ; and desires that know neither ending nor bound !

These, however, are but the faint glimmerings of his once glorious illumination. All his primitive faculties are now lapsed and darkened ; he is become enslaved to his natural subjects ; the world is wrested out of his hands ; he comes as an alien into it, and may literally be called “ a stranger and pilgrim upon earth.”

All other animals are gifted with a clear knowledge and instant discernment of whatever concerns them : man’s utmost wisdom, on the contrary, is the bare result of comparing and inferring ; a mere inquirer called Reason, a substitute in the want of knowledge, a groping in the want of light ; he must doubt before he reasons, and examine before he decides.

Thus ignorant, feeble, deeply depraved, and the least sufficient, of all creatures, in a state of independence, man is impelled to derive succour, strength, and even wisdom, from society. When he turns a pitying ear and helping hand to the distressed, he is entitled, in his turn, to be heard and assisted. He is interested in others, others are interested in him. His affections grow more diffused, his powers more complicated ; and, in any society or

system
would
efficacy

You
an ex
you
in suc
breath
tion,
have
throu
ever v
public
others
virtue
save s
murde
tion o
lation,
the be
what
upon
can, I
Nei
extent
any of
them,
around
of emp
selves,
confed

system of such mutual benevolence, each would enjoy the strength, virtue, and efficacy of the whole.

You have, Sir, said Harry, here drawn an exceeding sweet picture of society, and you know I am but a fool and a novice in such matters. But, if any other man breathing had given me such a description, I should, from all my little reading, have withstood him to the face. Look through all the states and associations that ever were upon earth; throughout the republics of Greece, Italy, Asia Minor, and others the most renowned for urbanity and virtue; and yet what do you find them, save so many bands of public robbers and murderers, confederated for the destruction of the rest of mankind? what desolation, what bloodshed, what carnage from the beginning! what a delight in horrors! what a propensity in all to inflict misery upon others! The malignity of the fiends can, I think, pierce no deeper!

Neither is this, Sir, as I take it, the extent of their malevolence. For when any of these bands, or states, as you call them, have conquered or slaughtered all around them, they never fail, for want of employment, to fall out among themselves, and cut the throats of their very confederates; and this puts me in mind of

210 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

what is said by the Prince of peace, "The prince of this world cometh, and has no part in me." And again he says to the purpose, that fathers and sons, and mothers and daughters, shall be divided against each other, and that "a man's enemies shall be those of his own household."

I lately met with a fragment of an epic poem, that struck me wonderfully at the time; and I recollect some of the lines that contain, in my opinion, the most genuine, the truest picture that ever was drawn of the state of mankind.

- "Man comes into this passing world in weakness,
- "And cries for help to man,—for feeble is he,
- "And many are his foes. Thirst, hunger, nakedness;
- "Diseases infinite within his frame;
- "Without, inclemency, the wrath of seasons,
- "Famines, pests, plagues, devouring elements,
- "Earthquakes beneath, the thunders rolling o'er him;
- "Age and infirmity on either hand;
- "And Death, who shakes the certain dart behind him!
- "These, surely, one might deem were ills sufficient.
- "Man thinks not so; on his own race he turns
- "The force of all his talents, exquisite
- "To shorten the short interval, by art,
- "Which nature left us.—Fire and sword are in
- "His hand, and in his heart are machinations,
- "For speeding of perdition—Half the world,

"Down the steep gulph of dark futurity
 "Push off their fellows, pause upon the brink,
 "And then drop after."

Say then, my dearest father, tell me, whence comes this worse than flinty, this cruel heartedness in man? Why are not all like you? Why are they not happy in communicating happiness? If my eyes did not daily see it, in fact, as well as in history, I should think it impossible that any one should derive pleasure from giving pain to another. Can it be more blessed to destroy than to preserve, to afflict than to gladden, to wound than to heal! My heart wrings with regret for being cast into a world, where nation against nation, family against family, and man against man, are perpetually embattled; grudging, coveting, grasping, tearing every enjoyment, every property, and life itself, from each other.

Here Harry for a while held his handkerchief to his eyes; while his fond uncle dropt a silent tear of delight, at beholding the amiable emotion of his beloved.

Take care, my Harry, rejoined Mr Fenton, beware of the smallest tincture of uncharitableness! You see only the worse

part, the outward shell of this world, while the kernal, the better part, is concealed from your eyes. There are millions of worthy people and affectionate saints upon earth ; but they are as a kingdom within a kingdom, a grain within a husk ; it requires a kindred heart and a curious eye to discover them. Evil in man is like evil in the elements : earthquakes, hurricanes, thunders, and lightnings, are conspicuous, noisy, glaring ; while goodness, like warmth and moisture, is silent and unperceived, though productive of all the beauties and benefits in nature.

I once told you, my darling, that all the evil which is in you belongs to yourself, and that all the good which is in you belongs to your God : That you cannot in or of yourself so much as think a good thought, or form a good wish, or oppose a single temptation or evil motion of any kind. And what I then said of you may equally be said of all men, and of the highest angels now in blifs.

No creature can be better than A CRAVING AND DARK DESIRE. No efforts of its own can possibly kindle the smallest portion of light or of love, till God, by giving himself, gives his light and love into it.

H
evil a
the C
darkn
but fo
possib
the li
howe
their
Go
things
give,
while
it has
bestov
can be
Re
in you
when
ithness
grudg
but th
of ben
formin
sible v
one, a
ty, all
other.
As
love, r
son lo

Here lies the eternal difference between evil and good, between the creature and the Creator : the spirits who are now in darkness, are there for no other reason, but for their desire of a proud and impossible independence ; for their rejecting the light and love of that God, in whom, however, they live, and move, and have their desolate being.

God is already the fulness of all possible things ; he has, therefore, all things to give, but nothing to desire. The creature, while empty of God, is a wanting desire ; it has all things to crave, but nothing to bestow. No two things in the universe can be more opposite, more contrasted.

Remember therefore, this distinction in yourself and all others ; remember, that when you feel or see any instance of selfishness, you feel and see the coveting, grudging, and grappling of the creature ; but that when you feel or see any instance of benevolence, you feel and see the informing influence of your God. All possible vice and malignity subsists in the one, all possible virtue, all possible beauty, all possible blessedness, subsists in the other.

As God alone is love, and nothing but love, no arguments of our own can reason love into us, no efforts of our own

can possibly attain it. It must spring up within us from the divine bottom, or source, wherein our existence stands ; and it must break through the dark and narrow womb of Self into sentiments and feelings of good-will for others, before this child of God can be born into the world.

Self is wholly a miser, it contracts what it possesses, and at the same time attracts all that it doth not possess. It at once thrusts out others from its own proposed enjoyments, and would draw into its little whirlpool whatever others enjoy.

Love, on the contrary, is a giving, not a craving ; an expansion, not a contraction ; it breaks in pieces the condensing circle of self, and goes forth in the delightfulness of its desire to bless.

Self is a poor, dark, and miserable avariciousness, incapable of enjoying what it hath, through its grappling and grasping at what it hath not. The impossibility of its holding all things, makes it envious of those who are in possession of any thing ; and envy kindles the fire of hell, wrath, and wretchedness, throughout its existence.

Love, on the other hand, is rich, enlightening, and full of delight ; the boundlessness of its wishes makes the infinity

of its wealth; and, without seeking or requiring, it cannot fail of finding its own enjoyment and blessedness, in its desire to communicate and diffuse blessing and enjoyment.

But is it not, Sir, a very terrible thing, said Harry, for poor creatures to be evil by the necessity of their nature?

You mistake this matter, my Harry, you take the emptiness, darkness, and desire, in the creature, to be the evil of the creature. They are, indeed, the only possible cause of evil in or to any creature; but they are exceedingly far from being an evil in themselves; they are, on the contrary, the only, the necessary, and indispensable foundation whereon any creaturely benefit can be built. It is extremely good for the creature to be poor, and weak, and empty, and dark, and desiring; for hereby he becomes a capacity for being supplied with all the riches, powers, glories, and blessedness of his God.

As God is every where in and of himself the fulness of all possible beings and beings, he cannot create any thing independent or out of himself; they cannot be, but by being both in him and by him. Could it be otherwise, could any creature be wise, or powerful, or happy, in and of

itself, what a poor and stinted happiness must that have been? its blessedness, in that case, must have been limited, like its being; and how infinitely, my child, should we then have fallen short of "that eternal weight of glory" intended for us! But God has been graciously pleased to provide better things. If we humbly and desirously depend upon him, we become entitled to all that he has and that he is. He will enlighten our darkness with his own illumination; he will inform our ignorance with his own wisdom; his omnipotence will become the strength of our weakness; he himself will be our rectitude and guide from all error; he will purify our pollution; put his own robe on our nakedness; enrich our poverty with the heart-felt treasures of himself; and we shall be as so many mirrors, wherein our divine friend and father shall delight to behold the express image of his own person, his own perfections and beauties represented for ever!

O Sir! exclaimed Harry, how you gladden, how you transport me! I shall now no longer repine at my own weakness, or blindness, or ignorance, or insufficiency of any kind; since all these are but as so many vessels prepared to contain pearls of infinite price, even the riches, the enjoy-

men
I see
thing

Yo
you
prop
fed,
mort

Yo
sis, h
sensu
fully
God
guilt
truste
tures,
to the
the fe
the fo
in him
to per
gross
tality,
he ha
he ha

No
his sp
to its
and d
ver, i
the po

Vol

ment and fulness of my God. Never will I seek or desire, never will I accept any thing less than himself.

You must, my child, said Mr Fenton ; you are still in the flesh, in a carnal and propertied world ; your old man must be fed, though not pampered ; it must be mortified, but not slain.

You read, in the third chapter of Genesis, how our first father lusted after the sensual fruits of this world ; how he wilfully broke the sole commandment of his God ; how he added to his apostacy the guilt of aspiring at independence ; how he trusted to the promise and virtue of creatures, for making him equal in godhead to the Creator ; how in that day he died the fearfulest of all deaths, a death to the fountain of life, light, and love within him ; and how his eyes were opened to perceive the change of his body into grossness, corruption, diseases, and mortality, conformable to the world, to which he had turned his faith, and into which he had cast himself.

Now, had man continued in this state, his spirit, which had turned from God into its own creaturely emptiness, darkness, and desire, must have so continued for ever, in its own hell and misery, without the possibility of exciting or acquiring the

smallest spark of benevolence or virtue of any kind. But God, in compassion to Adam, and more especially in compassion to his yet unsinning progeny, infused, into his undying essence, a small embryo or re-conception of that lately forfeited image, which, in creation, had borne the perfect likeness of the Creator.

From hence arises the only capacity of any goodness in man. And, according as we suppress or quench, or encourage and foster this heavenly seed, or infant offspring of God within us, in such proportion we become either evil, malignant, and reprobate; or benevolent, and replete with divine propensities and affections.

Now, Harry, let us turn our eyes to our gross and outward man; for, as I told you, it must be cared for, and sustained agreeable to its nature; and it is well deserving of our attention; forasmuch as it is the husk, the habitation, and temple of that god-like conception, which, when matured, is to break forth into never-ending glory.

Lastly, this same outward man is further to be regarded by us, forasmuch as his infirmities, frailties, distemperatures, afflictions, aches, and anguishes, are so intimately felt by his divine inmate, that they occasionally excite those thousand

social
ment
conn

It
into
thou
as m
not c

W
with
prop
fore
invic
natur

"no
If

inher
men,
tice,
their
at pl
fram
(ever
other

LAW
and a
man,
obser

Th
stimo
Law

social charities, relations, and endearments, that, with links of golden love, connect the brotherhood of man.

It is therefore worth while to inquire into the claims and rights of this close, though gross companion ; at least, so far as may be requisite for his necessary, if not comfortable subsistence upon earth.

We find that God has intrusted him with life, liberty, and strength to acquire property for his sustenance. It is therefore his duty to preserve all these trusts inviolate ; for, as they are wedded to his nature, " what God hath so joined, let " no man put asunder."

If these were not. my Harry, the natural inheritable, and indefeasible rights of all men, there would be no wrong, no injustice, in depriving all you should meet, of their liberty, their lives, and properties, at pleasure. For, all laws that were ever framed for the good government of men (even with the divine decalogue) are no other than faint transcripts of that eternal LAW OF BENEVOLENCE, which was written and again retraced in the bosom of the first man, and which all his posterity ought to observe, without further obligation.

The capital apostle, St Paul, bears testimony also to the impression of this Law of Rights on the consciences and

hearts of all men, where he says, in the second chapter of his epistle to the Romans,
 " Not the hearers of the law are just
 " before God, but the doers of the law
 " shall be justified. For, when the Gen-
 " tiles, which have not the law, do by
 " nature the things contained in the law,
 " these, having not the law, are a law un-
 " to themselves: which shews the work
 " of the law written in their hearts; their
 " consciences also bearing witne's, and
 " their thoughts, the mean-while, accu-
 " sing or else excusing one another."

But, Sir, interrupted Harry, I am quite astonished at the falling-off of the father of mankind. So infinitely benefited and obliged as he was, so necessarily dependent also on his omnipotent Benefactor; how foolish, how base, how ungrateful, how unpardonable, as I think, was his wonderful apostacy! Wretched creatures that we are! no sound branch, to be sure, could ever spring from so debased, so cankered a stock.

Let us not be prone to judge of others, my Harry. I am confident, as I am of my being, that had you or I been in the case and place of Adam, we should have fallen in like manner. He had an old and a very subtle adversary to deal with. He felt himself powerful, glorious and happy.

He had no notion that his present state could change for the worse. He was yet a novice in existence. He could form no conception of the depravity, pains, and mortality, that afterward ensued. And he was strongly tempted by sensual objects from without, and by the emotions of his creaturely nature within him. But of this I am assured, Harry, that, if he was the greatest sinner, he was also the greatest and most contrite penitent that ever existed; as the comparison of his first with his latter state, must have given him the most poignant and bitter compunctions, and must have caused him, with tenfold energy, to cling to that Rock from which he was hewn, but from whence he had fallen.

I have already shewn you, Harry, that every man has a right in his person and property; and that this right is natural, inheritable, and indefeasible. No consent of parties, no institution, can make any change in this great and fundamental law of right; it is universal, invariable, and unalienable, to any man or system of men. It is only defeasible in particular cases; as where one man by assailing the safety of another, justly forfeits the title which he had to his own safety.

If human nature had never fallen into a state of inordinate appetite, all laws and legal restraints would have been as needless and impertinent, as the study and practice of physic in a country exempted from mortality and disease : But for as much as all men are tyrants by nature, all prone to covet and grasp at the rights of others ; the great law of SAFETY TO ALL, canno otherwise be assured, than by THE RESTRAINT OF EACH FROM DOING INJURY TO ANY.

On this lamentable occasion, on this sad necessity of man's calling for help against man, is founded every intention and end of civil government. All laws that do not branch from this stem, are cankered or rotten. All political edifices, that are not built and sustained upon this foundation, " of defending the weak against the " oppressor," must tumble into a tyranny even worse than that anarchy which is called the state of nature, where individuals are unconnected by any social band. But if such a system could be framed, whereby wrong should not be permitted or dispensed with in any man, right would consequently ensue, and be enjoyed by all men, and this would be the perfection of CIVIL LIBERTY.

Sir, says Harry, I have heard some very learned men affirm, that God, in

who
prop
rulin
his v
earth
seene
over
and

In
firma
instr
wher
God
upon
the t
geny
king
God
rule
the i
nous
in th
right
rege
than
cane
" w
" ov
T
to an

whom is the disposal of all lives and all properties, has given to some a right of ruling over others ; that governors are his vicegerents and representatives upon earth ; and that he hath appointed the descendible and hereditary rights of fathers over families, of patriarchs over tribes, and of kings over nations.

In a qualified sense, my Harry, their affirmation may be just : all the agents and instruments and dispensers of beneficence, whether their sphere be small or great, are God's true representatives and vicegerents upon earth : he hath given authority to the tenderness of parents over their progeny : and he hath invested patriarchs and kings with the rights of protection. But God never gave the vulture a right to rule over the dovecote ; never gave up the innocent many for a prey to the tyrannous few. God never can take pleasure in the breaches of the law of his own righteousness and benignity. Arbitrary regents are no further of his appointment, than the evils of earthquakes and hurricanes, as where he is said " to give the wicked a king in his anger ; and to set over the nations the basest of men."

The God of all right cannot will wrong to any : " His service is perfect freedom."

It is his pleasure, to deliver from "the land of slavery, and the house of bondage:" he is the God of equity and good-will to all his creatures; he founds his own authority, not in power, but beneficence. The law, therefore, of safety and well-being to all, is founded in the nature of God himself, eternal, immutable, and indispensable.

One man may abound in strength, authority, possessions; but no man may have greater right than another. The beggar has as much right to his cloak and his scrip, as the king to his ermines and crown-lands.

To fence and to establish this divinely inherent right, of SECURITY TO THE PERSON AND PROPERTY OF MAN, has been the study and attempt of Hermes, Confucius, Minos, Lycurgus, Solon, Numa, and of all the legislators and systems of civil polity, that ever warmed the world with a single ray of freedom.

But so strong is the propensity to usurpation in man; so dangerous is it to tempt trustees with the investiture of power; so difficult to watch the watchers, to restrain the restrainers from injustice; that, whether the government were committed to the One, the Few, or the Many,

the p
ved tr
perpe
Mo
headl
fation
demo
violence
or co
ended
tyran
merce
the p
Ho
many
read
to gr
might
rise su
ternal
owing
tion.
He
quit,
some
libert
sion,
is yet
ture,
ment
the d

the parties entrusted have generally proved traitors, and deputed power has almost perpetually been seized upon as property.

Monarchy has ever been found to rush headlong into tyranny, aristocracy into faction and multiplied usurpation, and democracy into tumult, confusion, and violence; and all these, whether distinct, or compounded with each other, have ended in the supremacy of some arbitrary tyrant, enabled, by a body of military mercenaries, to rule, oppress, and spoil the people at pleasure.

How England hath come, after the many wrecks and ruins which you have read of in history, to survive, to recover, to grow sounder from her wounds, and mightier from her discomfitures; and to rise superior, as we trust, to all future external and internal attempts, hath been owing to the peculiarity of her constitution.

Her constitution, it is true, is not yet quit, perhaps never ought to be quit of some intestine commotions. For though liberty has no relation to party, dissension, or cabal against government, there is yet a kind of yeast observable in its nature, which may be necessary to the fermentation and working up of virtue to the degree that is requisite for the pro-

duction of patriotism and public spirit. But when this yeast of liberty happens to light upon weak or vapid tempers, they are immediately affected, like small beer casks, and rave and boil over in abundance of factious sputter and turbulence. Party and faction therefore, being the scum and ebullition of this animating yeast, are sure signs and proofs of the life of liberty, though they neither partake nor communicate any portion of its beneficence; as rank weeds are the proof of a hot sun and luxuriant soil, though they are the detestable consequence of the one and the other.

“*Salus Populi*—Public Safety, Security “to the persons and Properties of the “People,” constitutes the whole of England’s polity. Her empire is “*Imperium legum*, the sway of law;” it is the dispensation of beneficence, of equal right to all: and this empire rises supreme over king, lords, and commons; and is appointed to rule the rulers, to the end of time.

Other states, before now, have been compounded, like ours, of prince, peers, and people, the one, few, and many united. But the error and failure of their constitution was this: The People, who are the Fountain of all Power, either retained, in their own hands, an authority

which they never were qualified to wield ; or deputed it to trustees without account ; without a provident resource, or due reserve of potency, when “ those intrusted with government should be found to betray their trust.”

The people of England, on the contrary, claim no authority in government, neither in the framing, administration, or execution of the laws, by which they consent to be governed. They are themselves imaged, and as it were epitomised, in their three several estates. The king represents their majesty ; the lords their nobility ; and the commons, more immediately, their legislative power. The constitution is the inheritance of them and their posterity ; and theirs is the right and duty, at all times, to watch over, assert, and reclaim it. Wherefore, as you find in history, when any of the three estates have usurped upon the others ; even when all of them together have dared to violate the frame of this salutary constitution ; the people to whom it belongs, have never failed, as on the other day's revolution, to restore and reinstate it.

England's three estates, of kings, lords, and commons, are parts of the people, under covenant with the people, and accountable to the people ; but the people,

as a people, make not any of the said estates. They are as a perpetual fountain, from whence the three estates arise; or rather as a sea of waters, in which three exalted waves should claim pre-eminence, which yet shall not be able to depart from their fund, but, in rotation, are dissoluble and resolvable therein.

Thus, however complicated the system of England's polity may be, it is all rooted in and branches from the TRUST OF THE PEOPLE, the trust of powers which they have granted to be returned in protection. And, in truth, it makes a little difference whether the powers, in such cases, be granted or assumed; who ever either receives or assumes such powers, save to the ends of beneficence, is equally guilty of usurpation and tyranny.

Government can have no powers, save the powers of the people; to wit, the power of their numbers, strength; and courage, in time of war; and in peace, of their art and industry, and the wealth arising therefrom. Whoever assumes to himself these powers, or any part thereof, without the consent of the proprietors, is a robber, and should, at least, be divested of the spoil.

On the other hand, if such powers are granted by the people, the people cannot

grant them for purposes to which they themselves cannot lawfully apply them. No man, for instance, can arbitrarily dispose of his own life or liberty, neither of the whole product of his own labours; forasmuch as the lives of himself and his family should be first sustained thereby, and his obligations to others fairly and fully discharged. He cannot, therefore, grant an arbitrary disposal of what he hath not an arbitrary disposal in himself. Much less can any man grant a power over the lives, liberties or properties of other people, as it would be criminal and highly punishable in himself to assail them.

Hence it follows, as evident as any object at noon, that "no man, or body of men, can rightfully assume, or even accept, what no man or body of men can rightfully grant," to wit, a power that is arbitrary or injurious to others. And hence it necessarily follows, that all usurpations of such powers throughout the earth, with all actual or pretended covenants, trusts, or grants, for the investiture or conveyance of such illicit powers, are null and void on the execution; and that no man, or nations of men, can possibly be bound by any consents or contracts, everfise of the laws of God and their

own nature, of common sense and general equity, of eternal reason and truth.

I beg pardon, Sir, says Harry, for interrupting you once more; but you desire that I should always speak my mind with freedom. You have delighted me greatly with the account which you gave of the benefits and sweets of LIBERTY, and of its being equally the claim and birth-right of all men; and I wish to Heaven that they had an equal enjoyment thereof. But this you know, Sir, is very far from being the case; and that this animating fire, which ought to comfort all who come into the world, is now nearly extinguished thro' out the earth.

O Sir, if this divine, GOLDEN LAW OF LIBERTY were observed, if ALL WERE RESTRAINED FROM DOING INJURY TO ANY, what a heaven we should speedily have upon earth! The habit of such a restraint would in time suppress every motion to evil. The weak would have the mightiness of this law for their support; the poor would have the benevolence thereof for their riches. Under the light and delightful yoke of such a restraint, how would industry be encouraged, to plant and to multiply the vine and the fig-tree; how would benignity rejoice, to call neighbours

and strangers to come and fearlessly partake of the fruits thereof!

How has the sacred name of all-benefiting LIBERTY been perverted and profaned by the mouths of madding demagogues at the head of their shouting rabble, who mean no other than a licentious unmuzzling from all restraint, that they may ravage and lay desolate the works and fruits of peace!

But liberty, in your system, is a real and essential good; the only source, indeed, whence any good can arise. I see it, I revere it, it shines by its own light in the evidence of your description.

How is it then, Sir, that there are persons so blind, or so bigotted against their own interests and those of their fellows, as to declaim, with much energy and studied argumentation, against this divine, inheritable, and indefeasible right (not of kings, as it should seem) but of human kind?

I lately happened in company with a number of discontentedly looking gentlemen, whom I supposed to have been abettors of the late King James, and friends to the arrogating family of the Stewarts. Among them was one of some learning and great cleverness, and he paraded and

shewed away, at a vast rate, concerning the divinely inherent right of monarchs, implicit submission, passive obedience, non-resistance, and what not.

Our God, said he, is one God, and the substitutes of his Mightiness should resemble himself; their power ought to be absolute, unquestioned, and undivided. The sun is his glorious representative in the heavens, and monarchs are his representatives and mirrors upon earth, in whom he is pleased to behold the reflection of his own Majesty.

Accordingly we find, that the monarchs over his chosen people were of his special appointment; and that their persons were rendered sacred and awfully inviolable by unction, or the shedding of hallowed oil upon them. Many miscarriages and woful defaults are recorded of Saul, as a man, yet, as a king, he was held perfect in the eyes of his people. What an unhesitating obedience, what a speechless submission do they pay to all his behests! Though he massacred their whole priesthood to a man in one day, yet no murmur was heard; no one dared to wag a tongue, and much less to lift a finger against the Lord's anointed.

I own to you, Sir, that this last argument staggered me; such an express au-

thority of the sacred writings put me wholly to silence. Say, then, my dearest father, give me the benefit of your enlightening sentiments on this head, that I may know, on all occasions, to give to all men an account of the political faith that is in me.

It is extremely surprising, rejoined Mr Fenton, that all our lay and ecclesiastical champions for arbitrary power, who have raised such a dust, and kept such a coil about the divine, hereditary, and indefeasible right of kings, and the unconditional duty of passive obedience in the subject, have founded their whole pile of argument and oratory on the DIVINE APPOINTMENT of the regal government of the Jews, as the perfect model and ensample, whereby all other states are, in like manner, required to form their respective governments.

Now, if these champions had engaged on the opposite side of the question, and had undertaken the argument against arbitrary power, they could not have done it more effectually, more conclusively, more unanswerably, than by shewing that ARBITRARY POWER was the very EVIL so displeasing to the nature of God, that he exhibited his omnipotence in a series of public and astonishing wonders, in

order to deliver this very people from the grievance thereof; and, more especially, to proclaim to all nations and ages the detestation in which his ETERNAL JUSTICE holds all lawless dispensations, all acts of SOVEREIGN POWER that are not acts of PROTECTION.

Could these champions, again, have better enforced the argument against arbitrary power, than by shewing, that this people, so miraculously enfranchised, but now fat, and wantonly kicking under the indulgence of their God, had taken a loathing to the righteousness of the dispensations of their deliverer, "had rejected him," as he affirms, "from reigning over them," and had required a KING, like to the kings of the neighbouring nations, the very EVIL from which God had redeemed their forefathers?

Could these champions, further, have better demonstrated the miseries, the iniquities, the abominations of such a government, than by reciting the expostulations, the tender and earnest remonstrances of God himself, on the sufferings that these rebels were about to bring upon themselves from the enormities of an arbitrary and unlimited sovereignty? And, lastly, could they have better recommended, to the free and the virtuous,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. - 153

to stand out, to the death, against arbitrary oppression, than by shewing the obstinacy of these apostate Jews, when they answered, to the compassionating exhortations of their God—"Nay, but we will have a king, like all the nations, to rule over us."

Nothing, my Harry, can be more unaccountable, more astonishing, than the perverseness of that stiff-necked nation.

They daily drank the bitterest dregs of slavery, they had been galled by double chains, and had groaned under an unprecedented tyranny and oppression. They cried out to their God, and he miraculously delivered them from the land of their misery, and from the house of their bondage. Yet, on the first cravings of appetite, these soul-sensualized wretches desired to be returned to their chains and their flesh-pots, and longed to groan and gormandize in their old sty.

Hereupon God gave them flesh and bread to the full; and he brought them into a land "flowing with milk and honey," and abounding with all the good things of this life. He made them a free and sovereign people; discomfited their enemies before them; and informed their judges with his own Spirit, for the dispensation of righteousness; insomuch that

236 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

“ every man sat under his own vine, and
 “ did what was right in his own eyes.”
 And yet they lasciviously petitioned to be
 subjected to a state of ABSOLUTE DESPO-
 TISM, and this, for no assigned reason,
 save because it was the fashion ; “ Make
 “ us a king to judge us, like to all the
 “ nations around us.”

Here God, in the same act, approves his
 attributes of mercy and reluctant justice
 to his erring creatures. He punishes their
 rebellion by no greater a severity than
 the grant of their request.

“ And the Lord said unto Samuel,
 “ Hearken unto the voice of the people
 “ in all that they say unto thee ; for they
 “ have not rejected thee, but they have
 “ rejected me, that I should not reign over
 “ them. Howbeit, protest solemnly unto
 “ them, and shew them the manner of
 “ the king that shall reign over them.

“ And Samuel told all the words of
 “ the Lord unto the people that asked
 “ of him a king. And he said, This will
 “ be the manner of the king that shall
 “ reign over you :

“ He will take your sons, and appoint
 “ them for himself, for his chariots, and to
 “ be his horsemen. And some shall run
 “ before his chariots. And he will ap-
 “ point him captains over thousands, and

“ captains over fifties, and will set them
 “ to ear his ground, and to reap his har-
 “ vest. And he will take your daughters
 “ to be confectioners, and cooks, and
 “ bakers. And he will take your fields,
 “ and your vineyards, and your olive-
 “ yards, even the best of them. And he
 “ will take your men-servants and your
 “ maid-servants, and your goodliest young
 “ men, and your asses, and put them to
 “ his work, and ye shall be his servants.
 “ And ye shall cry out in that day, be-
 “ cause of your king which ye shall have
 “ chosen you ; and the Lord will not
 “ hear you in that day.

“ Nevertheless, the people refused to
 “ obey the voice of the Lord and of Sa-
 “ muel ; and they said, Nay, but we
 “ will have a king over us.”

And now, Harry, what do you gather from all these sacred authorities ? I gather, Sir, answered Harry, from the express and repeated declarations of holy writ, that whoever he be, whether sovereign or subject, who doth not wish that all men should be limited or restrained from doing injury to any, is a rebel to the will of the **GOD OF BENEFICENCE**, and an enemy to the **WELL-BEING OF HUMAN KIND**.

You have, exclaimed Mr Fenton, you have, in a few words, spoke the whole of the matter. On what you have said hang all the law and the prophets.

Again, my dear, continued Mr Fenton, it is evident from the history, that the Jews themselves did not pay the smallest regard to the divine hereditary right of kingship. Both David and Solomon, the second and third in succession, were established on the throne in direct contradiction to such pretended right. And on the succession of Rehoboam, the fourth king, ten of the twelve tribes repented of their submission to an arbitrary monarchy, and required the king to consent to a limitation of his authority, and to enter into a contract with the people.

"And they spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee."

But when Rehoboam, by the advice of his sleek-headed ministry, refused to covenant with the people, the ten tribes cried out, "What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; to your tents, O Israel!" And

the
bit
and
"

M
cal
mad
vide
rega
for
their
succe
the
usurp
the p
his su

"
" me
" for
" un
" for
" go
" of
" Ah
" give
" to
" hea
" said
" tanc
" dow
" his

thus the ten tribes revolted from the arbitrary domination of the houses of Saul and David. For, as the sacred text says, "THE CAUSE WAS FROM THE LORD."

Now, when these ten tribes sent and called Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and made him king over Israel, it is most evident, that they obliged him to limit the regal authority, and to covenant with them for the restoration and re-establishment of their popular rights. For, in the sixth succession, when Ahab sat upon the throne, the regal prerogative had not yet so far usurped on the constitutional rights of the people, as to entitle Ahab to deprive his subjects even of a garden for herbs.

"And Ahab said unto Naboth, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard; or if it seems good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. But Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. So Ahab came to his house heavy displeased, because Naboth had said, I will not give to thee the inheritance of my fathers: and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread."

Here we see that the people of Israel had so far recovered their originally inherent and hereditary rights, that the regal estate had not the privilege of wresting from any subject so much as an herb-garden.

This was a mortifying circumstance to royal elevation; but power is seldom unfruitful of expedients. A method was found of rending away Naboth's property (without his consent) UNDER COLOUR OF THE LAW TO WHICH HE HAD CONSENTED. He was falsely impeached, and forfeited his life and inheritance together. But God, by the signal punishment which he inflicted, for this breach on the natural rights of his people, evinced to the world, how dear they are in the eye of ETERNAL JUSTICE.

How deplorable then, my Harry, is the suppression of these rights, now nearly universal throughout the earth! But when people from their infancy, and from generation to generation, have been habituated to bondage, oppression, and submission, without any tradition or memorial delivered down to them of a happier or more equitable manner of life; they are accustomed to look on themselves, their possessions, and their progeny, as the rightful property of their rulers, to be

disposed of at pleasure ; and they no more regret the want of Liberty that they never knew, than the blind-born regret the want of the light of the sun.

Before I give you this paper that I have in my hand, this epitome or picture in miniature of the incomparable beauties of the Britannic constitution, it may be requisite to premise a few matters.

Travellers, when they survey a grand Egyptain pyramid, are apt to enquire by whom the stupenduous pile was erected, and how long it hath stood the assaults of time. But when nothing of this can be developed, imagination runs back through antiquity, without bounds ; and thence contemplates an object, with peculiar veneration, that appears as it were to have had no beginning.

Such a structure is the constitution of Great Britain ! No records discover when it had a commencement ; neither can any annals specify the time at which it was not.

William the Norman, above seven hundred years ago, on his entering into the Original Contract with the people, engaged to govern them according to the *bonæ et approbatæ antiquæ regni leges*, the good, well-approved, and ancient laws of

the kingdom ; this constitution was therefore ancient, even in ancient times.

More than eighteen hundred years are now elapsed since Julius Cæsar, in the sixth book of his commentaries, bore testimony as well to the antiquity as excellency of the system of the laws of Britain. He tells us, that the venerable order of the Druids, who then administered justice throughout Gaul, derived their system of government from Britain ; and that it was customary for those who were desirous of being versed in the said ancient institutions, to go over to Britain for that purpose.

Cæsar seems to recommend, while he specifies, one of the laws that was then peculiar to the constitution of Britain. He tells you, that, if a woman was suspected of the death of her husband, she was questioned thereupon with severity “ by her neighbours ;” and that, if she was found guilty, she was tied alive to a stake, and burned to death. The very trial used in Britain, “ by a jury of neighbours,” to this day.

It is, hence, very obvious, that our Gothic ancestors either adopted what they judged excellent in the British constitution, or rather superadded what was deemed to be excellent in their own.

The people who went under the general name of Goths, were of many different nations, who from the Northern, poured down on the more Southern parts of Europe.

Their kings were, originally, chiefs or generals, appointed to lead voluntary armies, or colonies, for the forming of new settlements in foreign lands; and they were followed by a free and independent multitude, who had previously stipulated that they should share and enjoy the possessions which their valour should conquer.

Next to the general, in order, the officers or principal man of the army were attended, on such expeditions, by their kinsfolk, friends, and dependents, who chose to attach themselves to their persons and fortunes respectively; and such attachments gave these officers great power and consideration.

On their conquest or seizure of any track of country, a certain portion thereof was allotted to the general, for the maintenance of his person and household. The general then divided the remainder among his officers, to hold of him, in fief, at the certain service of so many horse, or foot, well armed and provided, &c. and proportioned to the value and

extent of the land assigned. And the said officers again parcelled out the greatest part of the said possessions among their respective followers, to hold of themselves, in like manner and service as they held of their general.

On the conquest of a country, they seldom chose to exterminate the natives or old inhabitants, but allotted to them also separate remnants of the land ; and admitted them to the common and equal participation of such laws or usages as they brought from their own country, or chose to adopt.

Independent of the military services above reserved, the prince or chief, further, reserved the civil service or personal attendance of his feudatory officers, at certain times, and for certain terms, at his general or national court. This court was composed of three estates, the prince, the nobles, and such of the priesthood, whether Pagan or Christian, as held in fief from the prince ; and from this NATIONAL COUNCIL OUR PARLIAMENT took its origin.

The feudal officers also, on their part, reserved the like service and personal attendance of their proper tenants and vassals, at their respective courts of judicature. And for as much as, in such

courts, no civil or criminal sentence could take place, till the voice of the judge was affirmed by the court, which consisted of such as were peers, or equals to the party accused ; from thence we derive our free, ancient, and sacred institution of JURIES.

If we look back upon one of those fief or feudal kings, seated high on his throne and encircled with all the ensigns of royalty ; when we find him intitled the sole proprietor of all the lands within his dominions ; when we hear his subjects acknowledge, that he alone is the fountain from whence are derived all possessions, rights, titles, distinctions, and dignities ; when we see his most potent prefects and nobles, with lifted hands and bended knees, swearing fealty at his feet ; who would not take him for an arbitrary and most absolute prince ?

Such a judgment, however, would have been very premature. No prince could be more limited. He had not the licence of doing hurt to the person or property of the meanest vassal throughout his dominions. But was he the less powerful, think you, for being less absolute ? quite the contrary. While he acted within the sphere of his compact with the people, he acted in all the persons and powers of the people. Though prescribed with respect

to evil, the extent of his beneficence was wholly unconfined. He was not dreaded indeed, but on that account, he was the more revered and beloved by his subjects. He was a part of themselves ; the principal member of their body. In him they beheld, with delight, their own dignity and strength so gloriously represented ; and by being the proprietor of all their hearts, he became the master of all their hands.

O, exclaimed Harry, who could wish, after this, to be unrestrained from any kind of evil ? how frightful, how detestable is that power, which is not exercised in acts of benevolence alone ! and all, who please, may be infinite in the stretch of a good-will.

True, my dear, said Mr Fenton.— I have now, continued he, given you the rough and unformed rudiments of our Britannic constitution. And here I deliver to you my little model of the finished construction thereof, as it now stands on the revolution just atchieved by his present glorious majesty King William.

Your reading has informed you, and may further inform you, of the several steps and struggles whereby this great business was finally effected. It was not suddenly brought to pass ; it was the work of many ages ; while Britain, like Antæus, though

often defeated, rose more vigorous and reinforced from every soil. Of times long passed, what stupendous characters! what sacred names! what watchful councils! what bloody effusions! what a people of heroes! what senates of sages! How hath the invention of nature been stretched, how have the veins of the valiant been exhausted, to form, support, reform, and bring to maturity, this unexampled constitution, this coalescence and grand effort of every human virtue, **BRITISH LIBERTY!**

[Here follows Mr Fenton's short system of the beauties and benefits of our constitution. But if the reader loves amusement preferable to instruction, he is at liberty to pass it over, and proceed in the story.]

THE REGAL ESTATE.

THE king, in the constitution of Great Britain, is more properly the king of, than a king over the people, united to them, one of them, and contained in them. At the same time that he is acknowledged the head of their body, he is their principal servant or minister, being the depute of their executive power.

His claim to the throne is not a claim, as of some matter of property or personal right ; he doth not claim, but is claimed by the people in their parliament ; and he is claimed or called upon, not to the investiture of possessions, but the performance of duties. He is called upon to govern the people according to the laws by which they themselves have consented to be governed ; to cause justice and mercy to be dispensed throughout the realm ; and, to his utmost, to execute, protect, and maintain the laws of the gospel of God, and the rights and liberties of all the people without distinction : and this he swears on the gospel of God to perform. And thus, as all others owe allegiance to the king, **THE KING HIMSELF OWETH ALLEGIANCE TO THE CONSTITUTION.**

The existence of a king, as one of the three estates, is immutable, indispensable, and indefeasible : the constitution cannot subsist without a king. But then, his personal claim of possession, and of hereditary succession to the throne, is, in several instances precarious and defeasible : as, in case of any natural incapacity to govern ; or of an open avowal of principles incompatible with the constitution ; or in case of overt acts demonstrative of such principles ; or of any attempt to sap, or over-

throw a fundamental part of that system, which he was called in, and constituted, and has sworn to maintain.

Though the claim of all kings to the throne of Great Britain is a limited and defeasible claim, yet the world can afford no rival, in power or glory, to A CONSTITUTIONAL SOVEREIGN of these free dominions.

For the honour of their own body, they have invested this their head with all possible illustration : he concentrates the rays of many nations. They have clothed him in royal robes, and circled his head with a diadem, and enthroned him on high, and they bow down before the mirror of their own majesty.

Neither are his the mere ensigns or external shows of regency : he is invested also with powers, much more real than if they were absolute.

There are three capital prerogatives, with which the king is intrusted, which, at first sight, appear of fearful and dangerous tendency ; and which must infallibly and quickly end in arbitrary dominion, if they were not counterpoised and counteracted.

His principal prerogative is to make war or peace, as also treaties, leagues and alliances with foreign potentates.

His second prerogative is to nominate and appoint all ministers and servants of state, all judges and administrators of justice, and all officers, civil or military, throughout these realms.

His third capital prerogative is that he should have the whole executive power of the government of these nations, by his said ministers and officers, both civil and military.

I might here also have added a fourth prerogative, which must have been capitally everfive of the constitution, had it not been limited in the original trust, I mean a power of granting pardon to criminals. Had this power been unrestrained, all obligations to justice might be absolved at the king's pleasure. An evil king might even encourage the breach of law: he must, unquestionably, have dispensed with all illicit acts that were perpetrated by his own orders; and this assurance of pardon must, as unquestionably, have encouraged all his ministers and officers to execute his will, as the only rule of their obedience.

But God, and our glorious ancestors be praised! he is restrained from protecting his best beloved ministers, when they have effected, or even imagined the damage of the constitution. He is also limited in appeals brought by the subject for murder

or robbery. But on indictments in his own name, for offences against his proper person and government, such as rebellion, insurrection, riot, and breaches of the peace by murder, maim or robbery, &c. here he is at liberty to extend the arm of his mercy; forasmuch as there are many cases so circumstanced, so admittive of pitiable and palliating considerations, that *summum jus*, or strict justice, might prove *summa injuria*, or extreme injustice.

All pardonable offences are distinguished by the title of “*crimina læsæ majestatis*—sins against the king:” all unpardonable offences are distinguished by the title of “*crimina læsæ libertatis*—sins against the constitution.” In the first case, the injury is presumed to extend no further than to one or a few individuals; in the second, it is charged as a sin against the public, against the collective body of the whole people. Of the latter kind are nuisances that may endanger the lives of travellers on the highway; but, more capitally, any imagination proved by overt-act or evil advice, tending to change the nature or form of any one of the three estates; or tending to vest the government, or the administration thereof, in any one, or any two of the said estates, independent of the

other; or tending to raise standing armies, or to continue them in time of peace without the consent of parliament; or tending to give any foreign state an advantage over these realms by sea or by land, &c.

The king hath also annexed to his dignity many further very important powers and prerogatives, though they do not so intimately interfere with the constitution as the capital prerogative above recited.

He is first considered as the original proprietor of all the lands in these kingdoms; and he founds this claim, as well on the conquest by William the Norman, as by the limited kings or leaders of our Gothic ancestors.

Hence it comes to pass, that all lands, to which no subject can prove a title, are supposed to be in their original owner, and are therefore, by the constitution, vested in the crown. On the same principle, also, the king is intitled to the lands of all persons who die without heirs, as also to the possessions of all who are convicted of crimes subversive of the constitution or public-weal.

His person, while he is king or inclusive of the first estate, is constitutionally sacred, and exempted from all acts of violence or constraint. As one of the estates, also, he

is constituted a corporation, and his Teste-
Meipso, or written testimony, amounts to
a matter of record. He also exercises at
present the independent province of sup-
plying members to the second estate, by a
new creation; a very large accession to his
original powers. Bishops also are now ap-
pointed and nominated by the king, ano-
ther considerable addition to the royal
prerogative. His is the sole prerogative
to coin or impress money, and to specify,
change, or determine the current value
thereof; and for this purpose he is sup-
posed to have reserved, from this original
grant of lands, a property in mines of
gold and silver, which are therefore called
royalties.

As he is one of the three constitutional
estates, no action can lie against him in
any court; neither can he be barred of
his title by length of time or entry. And
these illustrations of his dignity cast rays
of answerable privileges on his royal
consort, heir-apparent, and eldest daugh-
ter.

The king hath also some other inferior
and conditional powers, such as of institu-
ting fairs and markets; and of issuing pa-
tents for special or personal purposes, pro-
vided they shall not be found to infringe
on the rights of others. He is also ca-

trusted with the guardianship of the persons and possessions of idiots and lunatics, without account.

I leave his majesty's prerogative of a negative voice in the legislature ; as also his prerogative (or rather duty) frequently to call the two other estates to parliament, and duly to continue, prorogue, and dissolve the same, till I come to speak of the three estates, when in such parliament assembled.

Here then we find, that a king of Great Britain is, constitutionally, invested with every power that can possibly be exerted in acts of beneficence : and that, while he continues to move within the sphere of his benign appointment, he continues to be constituted the most worthy, most mighty, and most glorious representative of Omnipotence upon earth.

In treating of the second and third estate, I come naturally to consider what those restraints are, which, while they are preserved inviolate, have so happy a tendency to the mutual prosperity of prince and people.

The ARISTOCRATICAL, or SECOND ESTATE.

THE Nobility, or second estate, in the constitution of Great Britain, is originally representative. The members were ennobled by tenure, and not by writ or patent; and they were holden in service, to the crown and kingdom, for the respective provinces, counties, or baronies, whose name they bore, and which they represented.

A title to be a member of this second estate was from the beginning hereditary: the king could not anciently either create or defeat a title to nobility. Their titles were not forfeitable save by the judgments of their peers upon legal trial; and when any were so deprived, or happened to die without heirs, the succession was deemed too important to be otherwise filled, than by the concurrence of the three estates, by the joint and solemn act of the PARLIAMENT, or COMMUNE CONCILIUM REGNI.

These truths are attested by many ancient records and parliamentary acts. And although this most highly ennobling custom was, at particular times, infringed by particular tyrants, it was inviolably

adhered to by the best of our English kings; and was observed even by the worst, excepting a few instances, till the reign of Henry VII. who wished to give consequence to the third estate, by deducting from the honours and powers of the second.

In truth, it is not to be wondered that any kings who were ambitious of extending their own power, should wish to break and weaken that of the nobility, who had distinguished themselves, by so many glorious stands, for the maintenance of liberty and the constitution, more particularly during the reigns of John, Henry III. the second Edward, and second Richard.

Till Henry VII. the nobles were looked upon as so many pillars whereon the people rested their rights. Accordingly we find, that, in the coalition or grand compact between John and the collective body of the nation, the king and people jointly agree to confide to the nobles the superintendence of the execution of the great charter, with authority to them, and their successors, to enforce the due performance of the covenants therein comprised.

What an illustrating distinction must it have been, when patriot-excellence alone (approved before the country, in the field

or
bi
est
cal
ver
unr
and
exe
blic
fort
set
stitu
T
inde
Har
baro
obno
or w
not
great
Thes
party
estate
was f
To
minist
thod
the ki
for lif
in fee

or the council) could give a claim to nobility, and compel, at it were, the united estates of king, lords, and commons, to call a man up to a second seat in the government and steerage of the nation.

Such a preference must have proved an unremitting incitement to the cultivation and exercise of every virtue; and to such exertions, achievements, and acts of public beneficence, as should draw a man forth to so shining a point of light, and set him like a gem in the gold of the constitution.

The crown did not at once assume the independent right of conferring nobility. Harry III. first omitted to call some of the barons to parliament who were personally obnoxious to him, and he issued his writs or written letters to some others who were not barons, but from whom he expected greater conformity to arbitrary measures. These writs, however, did not ennoble the party till he was admitted, by the second estate, to a seat in parliament; neither was such nobility, by writ, hereditary.

To supply these defects, the arbitrary ministry of Richard II. invented the method of ennobling by letters patent, at the king's pleasure, whether for years, or for life, or in special or general tail, or in fee-simple to a man and his heirs at

large. This prerogative, however, was thereafter, in many instances, declined and discontinued, more particularly by the constitutional king Henry the Vth, till meeting with no opposition from the other two estates, it has successively descended, from Henry VII. on nine crowned heads, through a prescription of near a century and a half.

Next to the king, the people have allowed to their peerage several privileges of the most uncommon and illustrious distinction. Their Christian names, and the names that descended to them from their ancestors, are absorbed by the name from whence they take their title of honour, and by this they make their signature in all letters and deeds. Every temporal peer of the realm is deemed a kinsman to the crown. Their deposition on their honour is admitted in place of their oath, save where they personally present themselves as witnesses of facts, and saving their oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and abjuration. Their persons are at all times exempted from arrests, except in criminal cases. A defamation of their character is highly punishable, however true the facts may be, and deserving of censure. During a session of parliament, all actions and suits at law against peers are suspend-

ed. In presentments or indictments by grand juries, and on impeachments by the house of commons, peers are to be tried by their peers alone; for, in all criminal cases, they are privileged from the jurisdiction of inferior courts, excepting on appeals for murder or robbery. Peers are also exempted from serving on inquests. And, in all civil cases, where a peer is plaintiff, there must be two or more knights impannelled on the jury.

The bishops, or spiritual lords, have privilege of parliament, but have not the above privileges of personal nobility. In all criminal cases, saving attainder and impeachment, they are to be tried by a petit-jury. Moreover, bishops do not vote, in the house of lords, on the trial of any person for a capital crime.

All the temporal and spiritual nobles that compose the house of lords, however different in their titles and degrees of nobility, are called peers (*pares*) or equals; because their voices are admitted as of equal value, and that the vote of a bishop or baron shall be equivalent to that of an archbishop or duke.

The capital privilege (or rather prerogative) of the house of peers consists in their being the supreme court of judicature, to whom the final decision of all

civil causes are confided and referred, in the last resort.

This constitutional privilege is a weighty counterpoise to his majesty's second prerogative, of appointing the administrators of justice throughout the nation; forasmuch as judges (who are immediately under the influence of the crown) are yet intimidated from infringing, by any sentence, on the laws or constitution of these realms, while a judgment, so highly superior to their own, impends.

The second great privilege of the house of peers consists in their having the sole judicature of all impeachments commenced and prosecuted by the commons. And this again, is a very weighty counterpoise to his majesty's third prerogative of the executive government of these nations by his ministers, since no minister can be so great, as not justly to dread the coming under a judgment, from which the mightiness of his royal master cannot protect him.

The third capital privilege of the house of peers subsists in their share, or particular department of rights in the legislature. This extends to the framing of any bills, at their pleasure, for the purposes of good government; saving always to the commons their incommunicable right

of granting taxes or subsidies to be levied on their constituents. But, on such bills, as on all others, the house of lords have a negative; a happy counterpoise to the power both of king and commons, should demands on the one part, or bounties on the other, exceed what is requisite.

The change of the ancient Modus, in conferring nobility, has not hitherto, as I trust, been of any considerable detriment to the weal of the people. But, should some future majesty, or rather some future ministry, entitle folk to a voice in the second estate, on any consideration, save that of eminent virtue and patriot-service, might it be possible that such ministers should take a further stride, and confer nobility for actions deserving of infamy; should they even covenant to grant such honours and dignities, in lieu of services subversive of the constitution; a majority of such a peerage must either prove too light to effect any public benefit, or heavy enough to effect the public perdition.

The DEMOCRATICAL, or
THIRD ESTATE.

THE ELECTION of commoners, to be immediate trustees and apt representatives of the people in parliament, is the hereditary and indefeasible privilege of the people. It is the privilege which they accepted, and which they retain, in exchange of their original inherent and hereditary right of sitting with the king and peers IN PERSON, for the guardianship of their own liberties, and the institution of their own laws.

Such representatives, therefore, can never have it in their power to give, delegate, or extinguish the whole or any part of the people's inseparable and unextinguishable share in the legislative power; neither to impart the same to any one of the other estates, or to any persons or person whatever, either in or out of parliament. Where plenipotentiaries take upon them to abolish the authority of their own principals; or where any secondary agents attempt to defeat the power of their primaries; such agents and plenipotentiaries defeat their own commission, and all the powers of the trust necessarily revert to the constituents.

The persons of these temporary trustees of the people, during their session, and for fourteen days before and after every meeting, adjournment, prorogation, and dissolution of parliament, are equally exempted, with the persons of peers, from arrests and duress of every sort.

They are also, during their session, to have ready access to the king or house of lords, and to address or confer with them on all occasions.

No member of the house of commons, no more than of the house of peers, shall suffer, or be questioned, or compelled to witness or answer, in any court or place whatsoever, touching any thing said or done by himself or others in parliament; in order that perfect freedom of speech and action may leave nothing undone for the public weal.

They have also, during session, an equal power with the house of lords to punish any who shall presume to traduce their dignity, or detract from the rights or privileges of any member of the house.

The commons form a court of judicature, distinct from the judicature of the house of lords. Theirs is the peculiar privilege to try and adjudge the legality of the election of their own members. They may fine and confine their own mem-

bers, as well as others, for delinquency or offence against the honour of their house. But in all other matters of judicature, they are merely a court of inquisition and presentment, and not a tribunal of definitive judgment.

In this respect, however, they are extremely formidable. They constitute the Grand Inquest of the nation; for which great and good purpose they are supposed to be perfectly qualified by a personal knowledge of what hath been transacted throughout the several shires, cities, and boroughs, from whence they assemble, and which they represent.

Over and above their inquiry into all public grievances, wicked ministers, transgressing magistrates, corrupt judges and justiciaries, who sell, deny, or delay justice; evil counsellors of the crown, who attempt or devise the subversion or alteration of any part of the constitution; with all such overgrown malefactors as are deemed above the reach of inferior courts, come under the particular cognizance of the commons, to be by them impeached, and presented for trial at the bar of the house of lords. And these inquisitory and judicial powers of the two houses, from which no man under the crown can be exempted, are deemed a sufficient allay

and counterpoise to the whole executive power of the king by his ministers.

The legislative department of the power of the commons is in all respects co-equal with that of the peers. They frame any bills at pleasure for the purposes of good government. They exercise a right, as the lords also do, to propose and bring in bills, for the amendment or repeal of old laws, as well as for the ordaining or institution of new ones. And each house, alike, hath a negative on all bills that are framed and passed by the other.

But the capital, the incommunicable, privilege of the house of commons, arises from that holy trust which their constituents repose in them, whereby they are empowered to borrow from the people a small portion of their property, in order to restore it threefold in the advantages of peace, equal government, and the encouragement of trade, industry, and the manufactures.

To impart any of this trust would be a breach of the constitution, and even to abuse it, would be a felonious breach of common honesty.

By this fundamental trust, and incommunicable privilege, the commons have the sole power over the money of the peo-

ple, to grant or deny aids, according as they shall judge them either requisite or unnecessary to the public service. Theirs is the province, and theirs alone, to inquire and judge of the several occasions for which such aids may be required, and to measure and appropriate the sums to their respective uses. Theirs also is the sole province of framing all bills or laws for the imposing of any taxes, and of appointing the means of levying the same upon the people. Neither may the first or second estate, either king or peerage, propound or do any thing relating to these matters, that may any way interfere with the proceedings of the commons: save in their negative or assent to such bills, when presented to them, without addition, deduction, or alteration of any kind.

After such-like aids and taxes have been levied and disposed of, the commons have the further right of inquiring and examining into the application of said aids; of ordering all accounts relative thereto to be laid before them; and of censuring the abuse or misapplication thereof.

The royal assent to all other bills is expressed by the terms, "Le roy le veut—" "the king wills it," but when the com-

mons present their bills of aid to his majesty, it is answered, “-Le roy remercier
 “ ses loyal sujets, et ainsi le veut—the
 “ king thanks his loyal subjects, and so
 “ willeth.” An express acknowledgment,
 that the right of granting or levying mo-
 nies, for the public purposes, lies solely, in-
 herently, and incommunicably, in the
 people and their representatives.

This capital privilege of the commons constitutes the grand counterpoise to the king's principal prerogative of making peace or war; for how impotent must a warlike enterprise prove, without money, which makes the sinews thereof! And thus the people and their representatives still retain in their hands the GRAND MOMENTUM of the constitution, and of all human affairs.

Distinguished representatives! Happy people! immutably happy, while WORTHILY REPRESENTED.

As the fathers of the several families throughout the kingdom, nearly and tenderly comprize and represent the persons, cares, and concerns, of their respective households, so these adopted fathers immediately represent, and intimately concentrate, the persons and concerns of their respective constituents, and in them the

collective body or sum of the nation. And while these fathers continue true to their adopted children, a single stone cannot lapse from the GREAT FABRIC OF THE CONSTITUTION.

The THREE ESTATES, in PARLIAMENT.

WITH the king, lords, and commons, in parliament assembled, the people have deposited their legislative or absolute power, IN TRUST, for their whole body; the said king, lords and commons, when so assembled, being the great representative of the whole nation, as if all the people were then convened in one general assembly.

As the institution, repeal, and amendment of laws, together with the redress of public grievances and offences, are not within the capacity of any of the three estates distinct from the others, the FREQUENT HOLDING OF PARLIAMENTS is the vital food, without which the constitution cannot subsist.

The three estates originally, when assembled in parliament, sat together consulting in the open field. Accordingly at

Running-Mead, five hundred years ago, king John passed the great charter (as therein is expressed) by the advice of the Lords spiritual and temporal, by the advice of several commoners (by name recited) *et aliorum fidelium*, and of others his faithful people. And, in the twenty-first clause of the said charter, he covenants, that, “ for having the common council of the “ kingdom to assess aids, he will cause “ the lords spiritual and temporal to be “ summoned by his writs, and moreover, “ that he will cause the principal com- “ moners, or those who held from him “ in chief, to be generally summoned to “ said parliaments by his sheriffs and “ bailiffs.”

In the said assemblies, however, the course became so great and disorderly, and the contests frequently so high between the several estates, in assertion of their respective prerogatives and privileges, that they judged it more expedient to sit apart, and separately to exercise the offices of their respective departments.

As there is no man or set of men, no class or corporation, no village or city, throughout the kingdom, that is not represented by these their delegates in parliament, this great body-politic, or repre-

sentative of the nation, consists, like the body-natural of a head and several members, which, being endowed with different powers for the exercise of different offices, are yet connected by one main and common interest, and actuated by ONE LIFE OR SPIRIT OF PUBLIC REASON, called the LAWS.

In all steps of national import, the king is to be conducted by the direction of the council, on whom it is equally incumbent to consult for the king with whom they are connected, and for the people by whom they are delegated, and whom they represent. Thus the king is, constitutionally, to be guided by the sense of the parliament; and the parliament alike is, constitutionally, to be guided by the general sense of the people. The two estates in parliament are the constituents of the king; and the people, mediately or immediately, are the constituents of the two estates in parliament.

Now, while the three estates act distinctly, within their respective departments, they affect and are reciprocally affected by each other. This action and reaction produces that general and systematic controul which, like CONSCIENCE, pervades and superintends the whole,

checking and prohibiting evil from every part of the constitution. And, from this confinement of every part to the rule of RIGHT REASON, ariseth the great LAW OF LIBERTY TO ALL.

For instance: the king has the sole prerogative of making war, &c. But then the means are in the hands of the people and their representatives.

Again: to the king is committed the whole executive power. But then the ministers of that power are accountable to a tribunal, from which a criminal has no appeal or deliverance to look for.

Again: to the king is committed the cognisance of all causes. But should his judges or justiciaries pervert the rule of righteousness, an inquisition, impeachment and trial impends, from whose judgment the judges cannot be exempted.

Again: the king hath a negative upon all bills, whereby his own prerogatives are guarded from invasion. But, should he refuse the royal assent to bills tending to the general good of the subject, the commons can also withhold their bills of assessment, or annex the rejected bills to their bill of aids; and they never failed to pass in such agreeable company.

Lastly: to the king is committed the

right of calling the two estates to parliament. But should he refuse so to call them, such a refusal would be deemed "an abdication of the constitution;" and no one need be told, at this day, that "an abdication of the constitution is AN ABDICATION OF THE THRONE."

Thus, while the king acts in consent with the parliament and his people, he is limitless, irresistible, omnipotent upon earth; he is the free wielder of all the powers of a free and noble people, a king throned over all the kings of the children of men. But should he attempt to break bounds, should he cast for independence; he finds himself hedged in and straitened on every side; he finds himself abandoned by all his powers, and justly left to a state of utter impotence and inaction.

Hence is imputed to the sovereign head, in the constitution of Great Britain, the high and divine attribute, **THE KING CAN DO NO WRONG**; for he is so circumscribed from the possibility of transgression, that no wrong can be permitted to any king in the constitution.

While the king is thus controuled by the lords and the commons, while the lords are thus controuled by the commons and the king, and while the commons are

thus controuled by the other two estates from attempting any thing to the prejudice of the general welfare, the three estates may be aptly compared to three pillars, divided below at equi-distant angles, but united and supported at top, merely by the bearing of each pillar against the others. Take but any one of these pillars away, and the other two must inevitably tumble. But while all act on each other, all are equally counteracted, and thereby affirm and establish the general frame.

How deplorable then would it be, should this elaborate structure of our happy constitution, within the short period of a thousand years hence, possibly in half the time, fall a prey to effeminacy, pusillanimity, venality, and seduction; like some ancient oak, the lord of the forest, to a pack of vile worms that lay gnawing at the root; or, like Egypt, be contemptibly destroyed "by lice and locusts!"

Should the morals of our constituents ever come to be debauched; consent, which is the salt of liberty, would then be corrupted, and no salt might be found wherewith it could be seasoned. Those who are inwardly the servants of sin, must be outwardly the servants of in-

fluence. Each man would then be as the Trojan horse of old, and carry the enemies of his country within his bosom. Our own appetites would then induce us to betray our own interests; and state-policy would seize us by the hand of our lusts, and lead us "a willing sacrifice to "our own perdition."

Should it ever come to pass that corruption, like a dark and low-hung mist, should spread from man to man, and cover these lands: should a general dissolution of manners prevail: should vice be countenanced and communicated by the leaders of fashion: should it come to be propagated by ministers among legislators, and by the legislators among their constituents: should guilt lift up its head without fear of reproach, and avow itself in the face of the sun, and laugh virtue out of countenance by force of numbers: should public duty turn public strumpet: should shops come to be advertised, where men may dispose of their honour and honesty at so much per ell: should public markets be opened for the purchase of consciences, with an "O yes! We bid most to those who set themselves, their trusts, and their country, to sale:"—If such a day, I say, should ever ar-

rive, it would be doomsday, indeed, to the virtue, to the liberty, and constitution of these kingdoms! It would be the same to Great Britain, as it would happen to the universe, should the laws of cohesion cease to operate, and all the parts be dissipated, whose orderly connection now forms the beauty and common wealth of nature—Want of sanity in the materials can never be supplied by any art in the building—A constitution of public freemen can never consist of private prostitutes.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.



gk 4218 2275

